



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 07608920 4

The
Gordon Lester Ford
Collection
Presented by Messrs.
Worthington Chauncy Ford
and
Paul Leicester Ford
to the
New York Public Library







J.P.
(Kennedy)
NBO

DUP. F



HORSE SHOE ROBINSON.



HORSE SHOE ROBINSON;

A Tale of the Tory Ascendancy.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SWALLOW BARN."

John Pendleton Kennedy,

"I say the tale as 'twas said to me."

Lay of the Last Minstrel.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

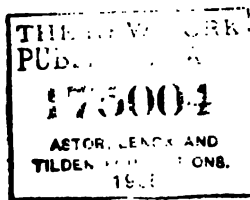
VOL. I.

SECOND EDITION.

PHILADELPHIA:

CAREY, LEA AND BLANCHARD.

1835.



Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 18
by *Carey, Lea & Blanchard*, in the Clerk's Office of the Dist
Court of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

TO WASHINGTON IRVING, Esq.

DEAR IRVING:

With some little misgiving upon the score of having wasted time and paper both, which might have been better employed, I feel a real consolation in turning to you, as having, by your success, furnished our idle craft an argument to justify our vocation.

You have convinced our wise ones at home, that a man may sometimes write a volume, without losing his character;—and have shown to the incredulous abroad, that an American book may be richly worth the reading.

In grateful acknowledgment of these services, as well as to indulge the expression of a sincere private regard, I have ventured to inscribe your name upon the front of the imperfect work which is now submitted to the public.

Very truly, yours, &c.

THE AUTHOR.

Baltimore, May 1, 1835.



TO THE READER.

THE events narrated in the following pages, came to my knowledge in the progress of my researches into the personal history of some of the characters who figure in the story.—I thought them worth being embodied into a regular narrative, for two reasons:—

First, because they intrinsically possess an interest that may amuse the lovers of adventure;—and

Second, because they serve to illustrate the temper and character of the war of our revolution.

As yet, only the political and documentary history of that war has been written. Its romantic or picturesque features have been left for that industrious tribe of chroniclers, of which I hold myself to be an unworthy member, and who have of late, as the public is aware, set about the business in good earnest. It shall go hard with us if we do not soon bring to light every remnant of tradition that the war has left!

An opinion has heretofore prevailed that the revolution was too recent an affair for our

story-telling craft to lay hands upon it.—But this objection, ever since the fiftieth anniversary has been nullified by common consent,—that being deemed the fair poetical limit which converts tradition into truth, and takes away all right of contradiction from a surviving actor in the scene. The pension-roll is manifestly growing thinner, and the widows—married young after the peace—make a decided majority on the list.—These are the second-hand retailers of the marvels of the war; and it is observed that, like wine which has descended to the heir, the events have lost none of their flavour or value by the transmission. This is all so much clear gain to our fraternity; and it is obvious, therefore, that we must thrive.

My reader will perceive that I have been scrupulous to preserve the utmost historical accuracy in my narrative:—and I hope, when he has finished the perusal, that he may find reason to award me the commendation of having afforded him some pleasure, by the sketch I have attempted of the condition of things in the south during the very interesting period of the “Tory Ascendency.”

MARK LITTLETON.

May 1, 1835.

HORSE SHOE ROBINSON.

CHAPTER I.

A TOPOGRAPHICAL DISCOURSE.

THE belt of mountains which traverses the state of Virginia diagonally, from north-east to south-west, it will be seen by an inspection of the map, is composed of a series of parallel ranges, presenting a conformation somewhat similar to that which may be observed in miniature on the sea-beach, amongst the minute lines of sand hillocks left by the retreating tide. This belt may be said to commence with the Blue Ridge or, more accurately speaking, with that inferior chain of highlands that runs parallel to this mountain almost immediately along its eastern base. From this region westward the high lands increase in elevation, the valleys become narrower, steeper and cooler, and the landscape progressively assumes the wilder features that belong to what is distinctly meant by 'the mountain country.'

The loftiest heights in this series are found in the Alleghany, nearly one hundred and fifty miles westward from the first thread of the belt; and as the principal rivers that flow towards the Chesapeake find their sources in this overtopping line of mountain, it may be imagined that many scenes of surpassing beauty exist in those ab-

rupt solitudes where the rivers have had to contend with the sturdy hills that nature had thrown across their passage to the sea.

The multiplication of the facilities of travel which the spirit of improvement has, of late years, afforded to this region; the healthfulness, or,—to use a term more german to its excellence,—the voluptuousness of the climate; and the extraordinary abundance of waters of the rarest virtue, both for bathing and drinking, have all contributed, very recently, to render the mountains of Virginia notorious and popular amongst that daintily observant crowd of well-conditioned people who yearly migrate in quest of health, or of a refuge from the heats of summer, or who, perchance, wander in pursuit of those associations of hill and dale which are supposed to repair a jaded imagination, and to render it picturesque, romantic and fruitful.

The traveller of either of these descriptions, who holds his journey westward, will find himself impelled to halt at Charlottesville, as a pleasant resting place in the lap of the first mountains, where he may stop to reinforce his strength for the prosecution of the rugged task that awaits him. His delay here will not be unprofitable. This neat little village is not less recommended to notice by its position in the midst of a cultivated and plentiful country, than by its contiguity to the seats of three Presidents of the Union; and, especially, by its immediate proximity to Monticello, whose burnished dome twinkles through the crown of forest that adorns the very apex of its mountain pyramid, and which, as it has now grown to be the Mecca of many a pilgrim, will of itself furnish a sufficient inducement for our traveller's tarrying. An equal attraction will be found in the University of Virginia which, at the distance of one mile, in the opposite direction from that leading to Monticello, rears its gorgeous and fantastic piles of massive and motley architecture—a lively and faithful symbol (I speak it reverently) of the ambitious, parti-colored and gallican taste of its illustrious founder.

From Charlottesville, proceeding southwardly, in the direction of Nelson and Amherst, the road lies generally

over an undulating country, formed by the succession of hills constituting the subordinate chain of mountains which I have described as first in the belt. These hills derive a beautiful feature from the manner in which they are commanded,—to use a military phrase,—by the Blue Ridge that, for the whole distance, rests against the western horizon, and heaves up its frequent pinnacles amongst the clouds, clothed in all the variegated tints that belong to the scale of vision, from the sombre green and purple of the nearer masses, to the light and almost indistinguishable azure of its remotest summits.

The constant interruption of some gushing rivulet, that hurries from the neighbouring mountain into the close vales that intercept the road, communicates a trait of peculiar interest to this journey, affording that pleasant surprise of new and unexpected scenery that, more than any other concomitant of travel, wards off the sense of fatigue. These streams have worn deep channels through the hills, and constantly seem to solicit the road into narrow passes and romantic dells, where fearful crags are seen toppling over the head of the traveller, and sparkling waters tinkle at his feet; and where the richest and rarest trees of the forest seem to have chosen their several stations, on mossy bank or cloven rock, in obedience to some master mind intent upon the most tasteful and striking combination of these natural elements.

A part of the country embraced in this description, has obtained the local designation of the South Garden, perhaps from its succession of fertile fields and fragrant meadows, which are shut in by the walls of mountain on either hand; whilst a still more remote but adjacent district of more rugged features, bears the appellation of the Cove, the name being suggested by the narrow and encompassing character of the sharp and precipitous hills that hem in and overshadow a rough and brattling mountain torrent, which is marked on the map as the Cove creek.

At the period to which my story refers, the population of this central district of Virginia, exhibited but few of the characteristics which are found to distinguish the present race of inhabitants. A rich soil, a pure atmos-

phers, and great abundance of wood and water, to say nothing of the sylvan beauties of the mountain, possessed a great attraction for the wealthy proprietors of the low country; and the land was, therefore, generally parcelled out in large estates held by opulent owners, whose husbandry did not fail, at least, to accumulate, in profusion, the comforts of life, and afford full scope to that prodigal hospitality which, at that period even more than at present, was the national boast of the state. The laws of primogeniture exercised their due influence on the national habits; and the odious division of property amongst undeserving younger brothers, whom our modern philosophy would fain persuade us have as much merit, and as little capacity to thrive in the world as their elders, had not yet formed part of the household thoughts of these many-acred squires. From Charlottesville, therefore, both north and south, from the Potomac to the James river, there extended a chain of posts, occupied by lordly and open-hearted gentlemen,—a kind of civil cordon of bluff free-livers, who were but little versed in the mystery of ‘bringing the two ends of the year together.’

Since that period, well-a-day! the hand of the reaper has put in his sickle upon divided fields; crowded progenies have grown up under these paternal roof-trees; daughters have married and brought in strange names; the subsistence of one has been spread into the garner of ten; the villages have grown populous; the University has lifted up its didactic head; and every where over this abode of ancient wealth, the hum of industry is heard in the carol of the ploughman, the echo of the wagoner’s whip, the rude song of the boatman, and in the clatter of the mill. Such are the mischievous interpolations of the republican system!

My reader, after this topographical sketch, and the political reflections with which I have accompanied it, is, doubtless, well prepared for the introduction of the worthy personages with whom I am about to make him acquainted.

CHAPTER II.

WHEREIN THE READER IS INTRODUCED TO TWO WORTHIES WITH WHOM
HE IS LIKELY TO FORM AN INTIMATE ACQUAINTANCE.

It was about two o'clock in the afternoon of a day towards the end of July, 1780, that Captain Arthur Butler, now holding a brevet, some ten days old, of major in the continental army, and Galbraith Robinson were seen descending the long hill that separates the South Garden from the Cove. They had just left the rich and mellow scenery of the former district, and were now passing into the picturesque valley of the latter. It was evident from the travel-worn appearance of their horses, as well as from their equipments, that they had journeyed many a mile before they had reached this spot; and it might also have been perceived that the shifting beauties of the landscape were not totally disregarded by Butler, at least,—as he was seen to halt on the summit of the hill, turn and gaze back upon the wood-embowered fields that lay beneath his eye, and, by lively gestures, to direct the notice of his companion to the same quarter. Often, too, as they moved slowly downward, he reined up his steed to contemplate more at leisure the close, forest-shaded ravine before them, through which the Cove creek held its noisy way. It was not so obvious that his companion responded to the earnest emotions which this wild and beautiful scenery excited in his mind.

Arthur Butler was now in the possession of the vigor of early manhood, with apparently some eight and twenty years upon his head. His frame was well proportioned, light and active. His face, though distinguished by a smooth and almost beardless cheek, still presented an outline of decided manly beauty. The sun and wind had tanned his complexion, except where a rich volume of black hair upon his brow had preserved the original fairness of a high, broad forehead. A hazel eye sparkled under the shade of a dark lash, and indicated, by its alternate playfulness and decision, an adventurous as well as a cheerful spirit. His whole bearing, visage and

figure seemed to speak of one familiar with enterprise and fond of danger:—they denoted gentle breeding predominating over a life of toil and privation.

Notwithstanding his profession, which was seen in his erect and peremptory carriage, his dress, at this time, was, with some slight exceptions, merely civil.—And here, touching this matter of dress, I have a prefatory word to say to my reader. Although custom, or the fashion of the story-telling craft, may require that I should satisfy the antiquarian in this important circumstance of apparel of the days gone by, yet, on the present occasion, I shall be somewhat chary of my lore in that behalf;—seeing that any man who is curious on the score of the costume of the revolution time, may be fully satisfied by studying those most graphic ‘counterfeit presentments’ of sundry historical passages of that day, wherewith colonel Trumbull has furnished this age, for the edification of posterity, in the great rotundo of the Capitol of the United States. And I confess, too, I have another reason for my present reluctance,—as I feel some faint misgiving lest my principal actor might run the risk of making a sorry figure with the living generation, were I to introduce him upon the stage in a coat, whose technical description, after the manner of a botanical formula, might be comprised in the following summary:—long-waisted—wide-skirted—narrow-collared—broad-backed—big-buttoned—and large-lapelled;—and then to add to this, what would be equally outlandish, yellow small clothes, and dark-topped boots, attached by a leather strap to the buttons at the knee,—without which said boots no gentleman in 1780, ventured to mount on horseback.

But when I say that captain Butler travelled on his present journey habited in the civil costume of a gentleman of the time, I do not mean to exclude a round hat pretty much of the fashion of the present day—though then but little used except amongst military men—with a white cockade to show his party; nor do I wish to be considered as derogating from that peaceful character when I add that his saddle-bow was fortified by a brace of horseman’s pistols, stowed away in large holsters covered with bear skin:—for, in those days, when hostile ban-

ners were unfurled, and men challenged each other upon the highways, these pistols were a part of the countenance, (to use an excellent old phrase,) of a gentleman.

Galbraith Robinson was a man of altogether rougher mould. Nature had carved out, in his person, an athlete whom the sculptors might have studied to improve the Hercules. Every lineament of his body indicated strength. His stature was rather above six feet; his chest broad; his limbs sinewy and remarkable for their symmetry. There seemed to be no useless flesh upon his frame to soften the prominent surface of his muscles; and his ample thigh, as he sat upon horseback, showed the working of its texture at each step, no less than that of the animal on which he rode. His motions bespoke extraordinary activity as well as strength;—and his was one of those iron forms that might be imagined almost bullet proof. With all these advantages of person there was a radiant, broad, good nature upon his face; and the glance of a large, clear, blue eye told of arch thoughts, and of shrewd, homely wisdom. A ruddy complexion accorded well with his sprightly, but massive features, of which the prevailing expression was such as silently invited friendship and trust. If to these traits be added an abundant shock of yellow, curly hair, terminating in a luxuriant cue that was confined by a narrow strand of leather cord, my reader will have a tolerably correct idea of the person I wish to describe.

Robinson had been a blacksmith at the breaking out of the revolution, and, in truth, could hardly be said to have yet abandoned the craft; although, of late he had been engaged in a course of life that had but little to do with the anvil, except in that metaphorical sense of hammering out and shaping the rough, iron independence of his country. He was the owner of a little farm in the Waxhaw settlement on the Catawba, and having pitched his habitation upon a promontory, around whose base the Waxhaw creek swept with a regular but narrow circuit, this locality, taken in connexion with his calling, gave rise to a common prefix to his name throughout the neighbourhood, and he was therefore almost exclusively dis-

tinguished by the soubriquet of Horse Shoe Robinson. This familiar appellative had followed him into the army.

The age of Horse Shoe was some seven or eight years in advance of that of Butler,—a circumstance which the worthy senior did not fail to use with some authority in their personal intercourse, holding himself, on that account, to be like Cassius, an elder, if not a better soldier. On the present occasion his dress was of the plainest and most rustic description. A spherical crowned hat with a broad brim, a coarse gray coatee of mixed cotton and wool, dark linsey-wolsey trowsers adhering closely to his leg, and hob-nailed shoes, constituted the principal object that gave character to his exterior. A red silk handkerchief tied carelessly around his neck, with the knot hanging over his bosom, communicated a certain air of jauntiness to his person. A long rifle thrown into the angle of the right arm, with the breech resting on his pommel, and a pouch of deer skin, with a powder horn attached to it, suspended on his right side, might have warranted a spectator in taking Robinson for a woodsman, or hunter from the neighbouring mountains.

Such were the two personages who now came 'pricking o'er the hill.' The period at which I have presented them to my reader was, perhaps, the most anxious one of the whole struggle for independence. Without falling into a long narrative of events that are familiar, at least to every American, I may recall the fact that Gates had just passed southward, to take command of the army that was destined to act against Cornwallis. It was now within a few weeks of that decisive battle that sent the hero of Saratoga 'bootless home and weather-beaten back,' to ponder over the mutations of fortune, and, in the quiet shades of Virginia, to strike the balance of fame between northern glory and southern discomfiture. It may be imagined then that our travellers were not without some share of that intense interest for the events that 'were on the gale,' which every where pervaded the nation. Still, as I have before hinted, Arthur Butler did not journey through this beautiful region without a lively perception of the charms that nature had spread around him. The soil of this district is remarkable for its blood red hue.

The side of every bank that was too steep for vegetation glowed in the sun with this bright vermillion tint, and the new made furrow, wherever the early ploughman had scarred the soil, turned up to view the predominating colour. The contrast of this with the luxuriant grass, or the yellow stubble, with the gray and mossy rock, and with the deep green shade of the surrounding forest, perpetually solicited the notice of the lover of landscape: and from every height that overlooked the narrow and elongated valleys, the eye rested with delight upon the rich meadows of the bottom land; upon the varied corn-fields that spread over the swelling hills, and jutted down in promontories, from either side, to the level ground below; upon the adjacent mountains, with their bald crags peeping through the screen of forest; and especially upon the broad and singular lines of the naked earth that, here and there, lighted up and relieved, as a painter would say, with its warm colouring, the heavy masses of shade.

The day was hot, and it was with a grateful sense of refreshment, that our way-farers, no less than their horses, found themselves, as they approached the lowland, gradually penetrating the deep and tangled thicket and the high wood that hung over and darkened the channel of the small stream that rippled through the valley. Their road lay along this stream and frequently crossed it at narrow fords, where the water fell from rock to rock in small cascades, presenting natural basins of the limpid flood, hemmed in with the laurel and the alder, and giving forth that gurgling, busy music which is one of the pleasantest sounds that can assail the ear of a wearied and overheated traveller.

Butler said but little to his companion, except now and then to express a passing emotion of admiration for the natural embellishments of the region; until, at length, the road brought them to a huge mass of rock, from whose base a clear fountain issued forth over a bed of gravel, and soon lost itself in the brook hard by. A small strip of bark, that some friend of the traveller had placed there, caught the pure water as it was distilled from the rock, and threw it off in a spout, some few inches above the surface of the ground. The earth trodden around this

spot, showed it to be a customary halting place for those who journeyed the road.

Here Butler checked his horse, and announced to his comrade his intention to suspend, for a while, the toil of travel.

‘There is one thing, Galbraith,’—said he, as he dismounted—‘wherein all philosophers agree,—man must eat when he is hungry, and rest when he is weary. We have now been some six hours on horseback, and as this fountain seems to have been put here for our use, it would be sinfully slighting the bounties of providence not to do it the honor of a halt. Get down man: rummage your havresac, and let us see what you have there.’

Robinson was soon upon his feet, and taking the horses a little distance off, he fastened their bridles to the impending branches of a tree; then opening his saddle bags, he produced a wallet with which he approached the fountain where Butler had thrown himself at full length upon the grass. Here, as he successively disclosed his stores, he announced his bill of fare with suitable deliberation between each item, in the following terms.

‘I don’t march without provisions, you see, captain—or major, I suppose I must call you now.—Here’s the rear division of a roast pig; and along with it, by way of flankers, two spread eagles, (holding up two broiled fowls,) and here are four slices from the best end of a ham. Besides these, I can throw in two apple-jacks, a half dozen of rolls, and—’

‘I cry you mercy, sergeant;—your wallet is as bountiful as a conjurer’s bag:—It is a perfect cornucopia. How did you come by all this provender?’

‘It is n’t so overmuch, major, when you come to consider,’—said Robinson.—‘The old landlady at Charlottes-ville is none of your heap-up, shake-down, and running-over measurers,—and when I signified to her that we mought want a snack upon the road, she as much as gave me to understand that there wa’n’t nothing to be had. But I took care to make fair weather with her daughter,—as I always do amongst the creatures,—and she let me into the pantry, where I made bold to stow away these few trifling articles, under the denomination of pillage.—’

If you are fond of Indian corn bread, I can give you a pretty good slice of that.'

'Pillage, Galbraith! You forget you are not in an enemy's country. I directed you scrupulously to pay for every thing you got upon the road.—I hope you have not omitted it to-day?'

'Lord, sir!—what do these women do for the cause of liberty but cook, and wash, and mend!'—exclaimed the sergeant.—'I told the old Jezebel to charge it all to the continental congress.'

'Out upon it, man! Would you bring us into discredit with our best friends, by your villanous habits of free quarters?'—

'I am not the only man, major, that has been spoiled in his religion, by these wars. I had both politeness and decency till we got to squabbling over our chimney corners in Carolina. But when a man's conscience begins to get hard, it does it faster than any thing in nature: it is, I may say, like the boiling of an egg; it is very clear at first, but as soon as it gets cloudy, one minute more and you may cut it with a knife.'

'Well, well! Let us fall to, sergeant; this is no time to argue points of conscience.'

'You seem to take no notice of this here bottle of peach brandy, major,'—said Robinson.—'It's a bird that came out of the same nest. To my thinking it's a sort of a file leader to an eatable—if it ar'n't an eatable itself.'

'Peace Galbraith;—it is the vice of the army to set too much store by this devil brandy.'

The sergeant was outwardly moved by an inward laugh that shook his head and shoulders.

'Do you suppose, major, that Troy town was taken without brandy? It's drilling and countermarching and charging with the bagnet, all three, sir. But before we begin, I will just strip our horses. A flurry of cool air on the saddle spot is the best thing in nature for a tired horse.'

Robinson now performed this office for their jaded cattle; and having given them a mouthful of water at the brook, returned to his post, and soon began to despatch, with a laudable alacrity, the heaps of provision before

him. Butler partook with a keen appetite of this sylvan repast, and was greatly amused to see with what relish his companion caused slice after slice to vanish, until nothing was left of this large supply but a few fragments.

'You have lost neither stomach nor strength by the troubles, sergeant; the short commons of Charleston would have gone something against the grain with you, if you had staid for that course of diet.'

'It is a little over two months,'—said Robinson,—'since I got away from them devils: and if it had n't been for these here wings of mine, (pointing to his legs,) I might have been a caged bird to-day.'

'You have never told me the story of your escape,'—said Butler.

'You were always too busy, or too full of your own thoughts, major, for me to take up your time with such talk,'—replied the other.—'But, if you would like me to tell you all about it, while you are resting yourself here on the ground, and have got nothing better to think about, why, I'll start like old Jack Carter of our mess, by beginning, as he used to say when he had a tough story a-head, right at the beginning.'

'Do so, sergeant, and do it discreetly—but first, swallow that mouthful, for you don't speak very clear.'

'I'll wash down the gutter, major, according to camp fashion, and then my throat will be as clear as the morning gun after sunrise.'

And saying this, the tall soldier helped himself to a hearty draught of cool water mingled in fair proportion with a part of the contents of his flask, and setting the cup down by his side he commenced, as follows:—

'You was with us, major, when Prevost served us that trick in Georgia, last year—kept us, you remember, on the look out for him t'other side of the Savannah, whilst all the time he was whisking of it down to Charleston.'

'You call this, beginning at the beginning? Faith, you have started a full year before your time. Do you think yourself a Polybius or a Xenophon—who were too famous old fellows, just in your line, sergeant,—that you set out with a history of a whole war.'

'I never knew any persons, in our line,—officers or

men—of either of them names,’—replied Robinson,—‘they were nick names, perhaps;—but I do know, as well as another, when a thing turns up that is worth notice, major;—and this is one of ’em:—and that’s the reason why I make mention of it.—What I was going to say was this—that it was a sign fit for general Lincoln’s consarnment, that these here British should make a push at Charlestown on the tenth of May, 1779, and get beaten, and that, exactly in one year and two days afterwards, they should make another push and win the town.—Now, what was it a sign of—but that they and the tories was more industrious that year than we were?’—

‘Granted,’—said Butler—‘now to your story, Mister Philosopher!’

‘In what month was it, you left us?’ inquired the sergeant gravely.

‘In March,’—answered Butler.

‘General Lincoln sent you off, as we were told, on some business with the continental congress: to get us more troops,—if I am right.—It was a pity to throw away a good army on such a place—for it wa’n’t worth defending at last.—From the time that you set out, they began to shut us in, every day a little closer. First, they closed a door on one side, and then on t’other: till, at last they sent a sort of flash-o’-lightening fellow—this here colonel Tarleton—up to Monk’s corner, which, you know, was our back door—and he shut that up and double bolted it, by giving Huger a most tremenjious lathering.—Now, when we were shut in, we had nothing to do but look out.—I’ll tell you an observation I made, at that time.’—

‘Well.’

‘Why, when a man has got to fight, it’s a natural sort of shing enough;—but when he has got nothing to eat it’s an onnatural state. I have hearn of men who should have said they would rather fight than eat:—if they told truth they would have made honest fellows for our garrison at Charlestown. First, our vegebles—after that devil took up his quarters at Monk’s corner—began to give out: then, our meat; and, finally, we had nothing left but rice,—which I consider neither fish, flesh, nor good salt herring.’—

‘You had good spirits, though, sergeant.’—

‘If you mean rum or brandy, major, we hadn’t much of that;—but if you mean jokes and laughs, it must be hard times that will stop them in camp.—I’ll tell you one of them, that made a great hurra on both sides, where we got the better of a Scotch regiment that was plaguing us from outside the town. They thought they would make themselves merry with our starvation—so, they threw a bomb shell into our lines, that, as it came along through the air, we saw had some devilment in it, from the streak it made in day light; and, sure enough, when we come to look at it on the ground, we found it filled with rice and molasses—just to show that these Scotchmen were laughing at us for having nothing to eat.—Well, what do we do but fill another shell with brimstone and hogslard, and just drop it handsomely amongst the lads from the land o’cakes?—Gad, sir, it soon got to the hearing of the English regiment,—and such a shouting as they sot up from their lines against the Scotchmen!—That’s what I call giving as good as they saunt, major—ha ha ha!’—

‘It wasn’t a bad repartee, Galbraith,’—said Butler, joining in the laugh.—‘But go on with your siege.’—

‘We got taken, at last,’—proceeded Horse Shoe—‘and surrendered on the 12th of May. Do you know that they condescended to let us go through the motions of marching outside of the lines?—Still it was a sorry day, to see our colours tied as fast to their sticks as if a stocking had been drawn over them.—After that, we were marched to the barracks and put into close confinement.’

‘Yes, I have heard that:—and with heavy hearts—and a dreary prospect before you, sergeant.’—

‘I shouldn’t have minded it much, major Butler,—it was the fortune of war. But they insulted us, as soon as they got our arms from us. It was a blasted cowardly trick in them to endeavour to wean us from our cause, which they tried every day: it was seduction, I may say. First, they told us that colonel Pinckney and some other officers had gone over;—but that, was too onprobable a piece of rascality,—we didn’t believe one word on’t. So, one morning colonel Pinckney axed that we mought be drawed up in a line in front of the barracks: and there he

made us a speech. We were as silent as so many men on a surprise party.—The colonel said—yes, sir, and right in their very teeth—that it was an infamous, audacious calamy: that whenever he deserted the cause of liberty, he hoped they would take him, as they had done some Roman officer or other—I think one Officious—as I understood the colonel—you’ve hearn of him, may be—and tie his limbs to wild horses, and set them adrift, at full speed—taking all his joints apart—so that not one traitorous limb should be left to keep company with another. It was a mighty severe punishment, whoever he mought’a been. The British officers began to frown—and I saw one chap put his hand upon his sword.—It would have done you good to witness the look the colonel gave him, as he put his own hand to his thigh to feel if his sword was there—he so naturally forgot, he was a prisoner.—They made him stop speaking howsoever, because they gave out that it was perditionous language:—and so, they dismissed us:—but we let them have three cheers to show that we were in heart.’

‘It was like Pinckney,’—said Butler—‘I’ll warrant him a true man, Galbraith.’

‘I’ll thribble that warrant,’—replied Galbraith—‘and afterwards make it nine.—I wish you could have hearn him. I always thought a bugle horn the best music in the world, till that day. But that day colonel Charles Cotesworth Pinckney’s voice was sweeter than shawns and trumpets, as the preacher says, and bugles to boot. I have hearn people tell of speeches working like a fiddle on a man’s nerves, major: but, for my part, I think they some times work like a battery of field-pieces, or a whole regimental band on a parade day.—Howsoever,—I was going on to tell you—colonel Pinckney put a stop to all this parleying with our poor fellows; and knowing, major, that you was likely to be coming this way, he axed me if I thought I could give the guard the slip and make off with a letter to meet you. Well, I studied over the thing for a while, and then told him a neck was but a neck any how, and that I could try;—and so, when his letter was ready, he gave it to me, telling me to hide it so that, if I was sarched, it couldn’t be found on my person. Do you

see that foot?" added Horse Shoe, smiling—"it isn't so small but that I could put a letter between the inside sole and the out,—longways, or even crossways, for the matter of that,—and that, without so much as turning down a corner.—Correspondent and accordingly I stitched it in. The colonel then told me to watch my chance and make off to you in the Jarseys, as fast as I could. He told me, besides, that I was to stay with you, because you was likely to have business for me to do."

'That's true, good sergeant'—

'There came on a darkish, drizzly evening; and a little before roll call, at sun set, I borrowed an old forage cloak from corporal Green,—you mought have remembered him,—and out I went towards the lines, and sauntered along the edge of the town, till I came to one of your pipe-smoking, gin-drinking Hessians, keeping sentry near the road that leads out towards Ashley ferry:—a fellow that had no more watch in him,—bless your soul!—as these Dutchmen hav'n't—than a duck on a rainy day.—So, said I, coming up boldly to him, 'Hans, wie gehet es?'—'Geh zum Teufel'—says he, laughing—for he knowed me. That was all the Dutch I could speak, except I was able to say it was going to rain,—so I told him—'Es will regnen?'—which he knowed as well as I did,—for it was raining all the time. I had a little more palaver with Hans; and, at last, he got up on his feet and set to walking up and down. By this time the drums beat for evening quarters, and I bid Hans good night; but, instead of going away, I squatted behind the Dutchman's sentry box;—and, presently, the rain came down by the bucket full; it got very dark and Hans was snug under cover. The grand rounds was coming,—I could hear the tramp of feet,—and as no time was to be lost, I made a long step, and a short story of it, by just slipping over the lines and setting out to seek my fellow.

'Well done, sergeant!—You were ever good at these pranks'

'But that wasn't all,' continued Robinson. 'As the prime file leader of mischief would have it,—outside of the lines I meets a cart with a man to drive it, and two soldiers on foot, by way of guard. The first I was aware of

it, was a hallo—and then a bagnet to my breast. I didn't ask for countersigns, for I didn't mean to trade in words that night: but, just seizing hold of the muzzle of the piece, I twisted it out of the fellow's hand, and made him a present of the butt-end across his pate. I didn't want to hurt him, you see, for it wa'n't his fault that he stopped me. A back-hander brought down the other; and the third man drove off his cart, as if he had some suspicion that his comrades were on their backs in the mud. I didn't mean to trouble a peaceable man with my compliments, but, on the contrary, as the preacher says, I went on my way rejoicing.'

'You were very considerate, sergeant; I entirely approve of your moderation. As you are a brave man, and have a natural liking for danger, this was a night that, doubtless, afforded you great satisfaction.'

'When danger stares you in the face,' replied Horse Shoe, 'the best way is not to see it. It is only in not seeing of it, that a brave man differs from a coward: that's my opinion. Well, after that I had a hard time of it. I was afraid to keep up the Neck road, upon account of the sodgers that was upon it; so I determined to cross the Ashley, and make for the Orangeburg district. When I came to the ferry, I was a little dubious about taking one of the skiffs that was hauled up, for fear of making a noise; so I slipped off my shoe, that had your letter, and put it betwixt my teeth and swum the river.—I must have made some splashing in the water—although I tried to muffle my oars, too,—for, first, I heard a challenge from the ferry house, and then the crack of a musket; but it was so dark you couldn't see an egg on your own nose.—There was a little flustering of lights on the shore, and a turn out of the guard, may be; but, I suppose, they thought it was a sturgeon, or some such beast, and so made no more of it: and I got safe to the other bank.'—

'Faithfully and bravely,—and ever like a tried soldier!'

'For the first three or four days the chances were all against me. The whole country was full of Tories, and it wasn't safe to meet a man on the road: you couldn't tell whether he was friend or enemy.—I durstn't shew my face in day time at all,—but lay close in the swamps: and

when it began to grow dark, I stole out, like a wolf, and travelled across the fields, and along the by ways.'

'You had a good stomach to bear it—sergeant.'

'A good stomach enough, but not much in it.—I'll tell you another observation I made:—when a man travels all night long on an empty stomach, he ought either to fill it next morning, or make it smaller.'

'And how is that to be managed, friend Horse Shoe?'

'Indian fashion,'—replied the sergeant. 'Buckle your belt a little tighter every two or three hours.—A man may shrivel his guts up to the size of a pipe stem. But I found a better way to get along than by taking in my belt.'—

'Now, for another stratagem!—you are the very mirror of jugglers.'

'I commonly, about dark, crept as near to a farm house as I mought venture to go; and, putting on a poor mouth, told the folks I had a touch of the small pox, and was dying for a little food. They were Christians enough to give me a dish of bread and milk, or something of that sort, and cowards enough to keep so much out of the way, as not to get a chance to look me in the face. They laid provisions on the ground, and then walked away while I came up to get them. Though I didn't think much of the fashion I was waited on,—and had sometimes to quarrel with a bull-dog for my supper,—I dont believe I ever ate with a better appetite in my life. The first bread of freedom, no matter how coarse, a man eats after his escape from prison, is the sweetest morsel in nature. And I do think it is a little pleasanter when he eats it at the risk of his life.'

Butler nodded his head.

'Well, after this,'—continued Horse Shoe,—'I had like to have lost all by another mishap. My course was for the upper country, because the nearer I got to my own home the better I was acquainted with the people. That scrummaging character, Tarleton, you may have hearn, scampered off, as soon as ever Charlestown was taken, after colonel Abraham Buford, who was on his way down to the city when the news was fotch him of our surrender. Buford accordingly came to the right about, to get

out of harm's way as fast as he could—and Tarleton followed close on his heels.—Think of that devil, major, trying to catch a man a hundred miles away! It was a brazen hearted thing!—considering, besides, that Buford had a good regiment with him. When nobody thought it any thing more than a brag, sure enough, he overhauls Buford yonder at the Waxhaws—onawares, you may say—and there he tore him all to pieces. They say it was a bloody cruel sight, to see how these English troopers did mangle the poor fellows.—I doubt there wasn't fair play.—But, major, that Tarleton rides well and is a proper soldier,—take him man to man.—It so happened that as I was making along towards Catawba, who should I come plump upon, but Tarleton and his lads, with their prisoners, all halting beside a little run to get water?—

‘Again in trouble,—sergeant. Truly you have had full measure of adventures!’

‘I was pretty near nonplushed, major,’—said Horse Shoe, with a broad laugh,—‘but I thought of a stratagem. I let fall my under jaw, and sot my eyes as wild as a mad-man, and twisted my whole face out of joint—and began to clap my hands, and hurra for the red coats, like a natural fool. So, when Tarleton and two or three of his people came to take notice of me, they put me down for a poor idiot that had been turned adrift.’

Did they hold any discourse with you?

‘A good deal; and, just to try me, they flogged me with the flats of their swords—but I laughed and made merry when they hurt me worst, and told them I thanked them for their politeness. There were some of our people amongst the prisoners, that I knew—and I was mortally afraid they would let on—but they didn't. Especially, there was Seth Cuthbert, from Tryon, who had both of his hands chopped off in the fray at the Waxhaws—he was riding double behind a trooper, and he held up the stumps just to let me see how barbarously he was mangled. I was dubious they would see that he knowed me, but he took care of that.—Bless your soul, major!—he saw my drift in the first shot of his eye. Thinking that they mought take it into their noddles to carry me along with them back,—I played the quarest trick that I suppose ever

a man thought of:—it makes me laugh now to tell it.—I made a spring that fetched me right upon the crupper of colonel Tarleton's horse, which set him to kicking and flirting at a merry rate; and, whilst the creature was floundering as if a hornet had stung him, I took the colonel's cap and put it upon my own head, and gave him mine. And after I had vagaried in this sort of way for a little while, I let the horse fling me on the ground. You would have thought the devils would have died a laughing.—And the colonel himself, although at first he was very angry, couldn't help laughing likewise. He said that I was as strange a fool as he ever saw, and that it would be a pity to hurt me. So he threw me a shilling, and, whilst they were all in good humour, I trudged away.'—

'It was a bold experiment, and might be practised a thousand times without success. If I did not know you, Robinson, to be a man of truth, as well as courage, I should scarce believe this tale. If any one, hereafter, should tell your story, he will be accounted a fiction-monger.'—

'I do not boast, major Butler; and, as to my story, I care very little who tells it. Every trick is good in war. I can change my face and voice both, so that my best friends shouldn't know me: and, in these times, I am willing to change every thing but my coat,—and even that, if I have a witness to my heart, and it will serve a turn to help the country. Am I not right?'

'No man ever blames another for that, sergeant,—and if ever you should be put to the trial, you will find friends enough to vouch for your honesty.'

'When I got away from Tarleton it wasn't long before I reached my own cabin. There I mustered my horse and gun, and some decent clothes; and after a good sleep, and a belly-full of food, I started for the north, as fast as I could, with my letter. I put it into your own hands, and you know the rest.'

'This will be a good tale for a winter night,'—said Butler,—'to be told hereafter, in a snug chimney corner, to your wife and children, when peace, as I trust it may, will make you happy in the possession of both. Your embassy has had marvellous good luck so far. I hope it

may prove a happy omen for our future enterprise. Now it is my turn, Galbraith, to tell you something of our plans. Colonel Pinckney has apprised me of the state of things in the upper country. Our good friend Clarke there meditates an attempt to regain Augusta and Ninety-Six; and we have reason to believe that some levies will be made by our confederates in Virginia and elsewhere. My business is to co-operate in this undertaking; and as it was essential I should have the guidance of some man acquainted with that country—some good soldier, true and trusty—the colonel has selected you to accompany me. These red coats have already got possession of all the strong holds: and the tories, you know, swarm in the country, like the locusts of Egypt. I stand in need, sergeant, of a friend with a discreet head and a strong arm. I could not have picked out of the army a better man than sergeant Galbraith Robinson. Besides, Horse Shoe,—he added, putting his hand gently upon the sergeant's shoulder,—‘old acquaintance has bred an affection between us.’

‘I am a man that can eat my allowance, major,’—said Robinson, with an awkward diffidence at hearing the encomium just passed upon him,—‘and that’s a matter that doesn’t turn to much profit in an empty country. But I think I may make bold to promise, that you are not like to suffer, if a word or a blow from me would do you any good.’

‘Your belt may be serviceable in two ways in this expedition, Horse Shoe: it may be buckled closer in scant times, and will carry a sword in dangerous ones.’—

‘May I ask, major,’—inquired Horse Shoe,—‘since you have got to talking of our business, what has brought us so high up in the country, along here? It seems to me that the lower road would have been nearer.’

‘Suppose I say, Galbraith,’—replied Butler, with animation,—‘that there is a bird nestles in these woods, I was fond of hearing sing, would it be unsoldierlike, think you, to make a harder ride and a larger circuit for that gratification?’

‘Oh! I understand, major,’—said Horse Shoe, laughing,—‘whether it be peace or whether it be war, these women keep the upper hand of us men. For my part, I think it’s

more natural to think of them in war than in peace. For, you see, the creatures are so helpless, that if a man dont take care of them, who would?—And then, when a woman's frightened,—as she must be in these times—she clings so naturally to a man! It stands to reason!"—

'You will keep my counsel, Galbraith,'—interrupted Butler.—'I have a reason which, perhaps, you may know, by and by, why you should not speak of any thing you may see or hear.—And now, as we have spent a good hour in refreshment, sergeant, make our horses ready. We'll take the road again.'

Robinson promised caution in all matters that might be committed to his charge, and now set himself about saddling the horses for the journey. Whilst he was engaged in this occupation, Butler was startled to hear the sergeant abruptly cry out—'You devil, captain Peter Clinch!—what are you about?'—and, looking hastily around, saw no one but the trusty squire himself, who was now sedately intent upon thrusting the bit into his horse's mouth,—a liberty which the animal seemed to resent by sundry manifestations of waywardness.

'To whom are you talking, Galbraith?'—

'Only to this here contrary, obstropolous beast, major.'

'What name did you call him by?'—inquired Butler.

'Ha, ha, ha!—was it that you was listening to?'—said Horse Shoe.—'I have christened him captain Peter—sometimes captain Peter Clinch. I'll tell you why.—I am a little malicious touching the name of my horse.—After the surrender of Charlestown, our regiment was put in the charge of a provost marshal, by the name of captain Clinch—and his first name was Peter. He was a rough, ugly, wiry-haired fellow, with no better bowels than a barrel of vinegar. He gave us all sorts of ill usage, knowing that we wa'n't allowed to give him the kind of payment that such an oncomfortable fellow deserved to get. If ever I had met him again, major, *settlers parbus*—as lieutenant Hopkins used to say—which is lingo, I take it, for a fair field, I would'a cudgelled his pate for him, to the satisfaction of all good fellows.—Well, when I got home, I gave his name to my beast, just for the pleasure of thinking of that hang-gallows thief, every time I had

occasion to give the creetur a dig in the ribs, or lay a blow across his withers!—And yet he is a most an excellent horse, major, and a hundred times more of a gentleman than his namesake—though he is a little hard-headed too;—but that he larnt from me. It really seems to me that the dumb beast thinks his name a disgrace,—as he has good right—but he has got used to it. And, besides, I hear that the cross-grained, growling dog of a captain has been killed in a scuffle sence I left Charlestown—so, now I consider my horse a sort of tombstone with the ugly sinner's name on it; and as I straddle it every day, you see,—that's another satisfaction.'

'Well sergeant, there are few men enjoy their revenge more good humouredly than you. So, come—straddle your tombstone again, and make the bones beneath it jog.'

In good glee, our travellers now betook themselves, once more, to the road.

CHAPTER III.

AN INCIDENT THAT SAVOURS OF ROMANCE.

By the time the sun had fallen to the level of the summits of the Blue Ridge, Butler and Robinson had progressed so far in their journey, as to find themselves in the vicinity of the Rockfish river—a rapid mountain stream, that traverses the southern confine of Albemarle, and which, at that period, separated, this county from Amherst. Their path had led them, by a shortcircuit, out of the ravine of Cove creek, along upon the ridges of the neighbouring hills; and they were now descending from this elevation, into the valley of the Rockfish, near to the point where the Cove creek forms its junction with this river. The hill was covered with a stately forest, and a broad, winding road had been cut down the steep side, in such a manner as to present a high bank on one hand, and an abrupt sheer descent on the other.—From this road might be seen, at intervals, glimmering through the screen of under-wood, the waters of the small river below; whilst, at the same time, the circuitous course of the descending track.

left but few paces of its length visible from any one point, except where, now and then, it came boldly forth to the verge of some wild crag, from which glimpses were to be obtained of its frequent traverses towards the deep and romantic dell that received the mingled tribute of the two streams.

Here, as our travellers journeyed downward, their attention was awakened by the cry of hounds in pursuit of game. These sounds came from the wood on the crest of the hill above them; and the clamorous earnestness with which they assailed the ear, and roused the far echo of the highlands, showed the object of chase to have been suddenly surprised and hotly followed. The outcry was heard, for some moments, pursuing a direction towards the river, when, suddenly from the midst of the forest, the sharp twang of a rifle-shot showed that some hunter was on the watch to profit by the discovery of the dogs.

Robinson, as soon as he heard the report, urged his horse forward with speed, to the first turn of the road below; dismounted, and, throwing his rifle into the palm of his left hand, stood ready to give his fire wherever he might find occasion. Butler followed, and reined up close beside his companion.

‘There is game afoot,’—said Galbraith,—‘and if that shot has not done its business, it may be my turn to try a hand.’

These words were hardly spoken, when a wounded buck rushed to the brink of the bank, some twelve or fifteen feet above the heads of the travellers, and, regardless of the presence of enemies, made one frantic bound forward into the air, and fell dead almost at Robinson’s feet. So effectually had the work of death been done upon the poor animal, that he seemed to have expired, in the convulsion of this last leap, before he reached the ground: his antlers were driven into the clay; his eyes were fixed, and not a struggle followed.

‘It was a home shot that brought this poor fugitive to the earth,’—said Butler, as he stood gazing at the piteous spectacle before him,—‘and sped by a practised hand.’—

‘I dont count him a good man, major,’—said Galbraith, with professional indifference,—‘who would mangle his

meat by random firing. Now, this buck was taken sideways, as he leaped above the tops of the bushes,—which is the ticklishest of all the ways of shooting a deer.—The man that plucked this fellow, I'll warrant, can plant his ball just where he likes:—right under the arm is the place for certainty; and the thing couldn't have been prettier done if the man had had a rest and a standing shot.'

During this short interval, the hounds had arrived on the spot where the buck lay bleeding; and these, after a few minutes, were followed by two hunters of very dissimilar appearance, who came on foot, slowly leading their horses up the hill.

The first was a tall, gaunt woodman, of a sallow complexion, jet black eyes, and round head of smooth black hair. His dress was simply a coarse linen shirt and trowsers, the heat of the day being such as to allow him to dispense with coat and waistcoat. He carried, in one hand, a battered straw hat, and, in the other, trailed a long rifle. His feet were covered with a pair of moccasins of brown leather, and the ordinary hunting equipments were suspended about his person.

The second was a youth, apparently about sixteen, dressed in a suit of green summer-cloth, neatly and fancifully adapted to his figure, which was graceful and boyish. The jacket was short, and gathered into a small skirt behind; and both this and the pantaloons were garnished with a profusion of black cord and small black buttons. A highly polished leather belt was buckled around his waist; a cap of green cloth rested, somewhat conceitedly, amongst the rich locks of a head of light, curly hair that fell, with girlish beauty, over a fair brow, and gave softness to a countenance of pure white and red; and a neat foot showed to advantage in a laced boot. The whole appearance of the youth was of one of an amiable and docile bearing; and the small rifle or carbine which he bore in his hand, as well as the dainty accoutrements that belonged to it, amongst which was a diminutive bugle, looked more like the toys of a pampered boy, than any apparatus of service.

No sooner had these two approached near enough to Butler and his attendant for recognition, than the youth,

quitting the hold of his horse, sprang forward with a joyous alacrity and seized Butler by the hand.

‘Captain Butler, captain Butler,’—he cried with great animation,—‘how glad I am you have come! And how fortunate it is that I should meet you! Get down from your horse; I have something to tell you.—Here, Stephen Foster, take this gentleman’s horse.’

‘You are a fine fellow, Harry,’—said Butler, dismounting.—‘That smiling face of yours is full of pleasant news; it assures me that all are well at the Dove Cote:’—then having given his horse in charge to Robinson, and walked a few paces apart with his young friend, he inquired, in a low and anxious tone—‘Mildred, my dear Henry—what of your sister Mildred?—Has she received my letter? Does she expect me? Is your father.’—

‘Now, captain,’—interrupted the other—‘but heigh!—don’t the newspapers say you are brevetted?—I am a pretty fellow to forget that!—Well then, major Butler, let me answer one question at a time.—In the first place, sister Mildred is as well as any girl can be, that has a whole bushel of crosses to keep her out of spirits.—Poor thing, she frets so, about you and my father!—In the second place, she received your letter a week ago, and has had me patrolling this ridge every day since, just to keep a look-out for you;—and, for the sake of company, I have had Stephen Foster hunting here all the time—more for an excuse than any thing else, because on this side of the river the drives are not the best for deer—a man might be here a fortnight and not get a shot.—Sister Mildred wanted me, if I should see you first, just to whisper to you that it is impossible to do any thing with my father;—especially at this time,—for he has one of these English officers staying at the Dove Cote now, who, I am afraid,—and so is sister Mildred,—has come to do some mischief. Mildred says I must make some appointment with you to see her privately.—I thought of Mrs. Dimock’s;—but this Englishman has a servant staying over there, and, may be, it would’nt do.—So, major, you will have to ride down to the big chestnut, on the bank of the river, just under the rock that we call the Fawn’s Tower—you know where that is?—it isn’t more than two miles from here.’

'I know it well, Henry,—I will wait there patiently,'—replied Butler, as he now returned to his horse.—

'Haven't we been in luck,'—said Henry,—'to get so fine a buck at last? This fellow has eight branches. It is Stephen's rifle that has done it.'—

The woodman, during this conversation, had taken possession of his spoil, and was now busily engaged with his knife in cutting open and preparing the animal for transportation, according to the usages of woodcraft; whilst Robinson stood by, admiring the dexterity with which this office was performed. When the buck was, at last, thrown by Stephen across his horse, Henry gave him orders to ride forward.

'You will carry our game to your own house, Stephen; and dont forget, to-morrow, to let us have the saddle at the Dove Cote. And Stephen,—you need not say that we have found any acquaintances upon the road:—you understand?'—

The man bowed his head, in token of obedience, and getting upon his long-backed steed, behind the buck, was soon lost to view in the windings of the hill.

'Sister Mildred is sometimes downright melancholy,'—said the young hunter, after he had remounted, and now rode beside Butler.—'She is troubled about you, and is always telling me of some unpleasant dream.—I almost think she is over-fanciful:—and, then, she reads every thing about the army, and talks almost like a man about soldiering.—Do you know she is making a soldier of me? I am constantly reading military books, and practising drill, and laying out fortifications—just as if I was going into camp. My father doesn't know a word of it; his time is taken up with these English officers,—writing to them,—and, every now and then, there are some of them at our house. Mildred knows them:—a famous spy she would make! Isn't she an excellent girl, major Butler?'—

'You and I should guard her, Henry, with more care than we guard our lives,'—replied Butler, with a serious emphasis.

'I hope,'—returned Henry,—'she will be in better spirits, after she sees you.'

'I would to heaven,'—said Butler,—'that we all had

more reason to be of good cheer, than we are likely to have. It is as cloudy a day, Henry, as you may ever behold again, should you live, as I pray you may, to the ripest old age.'

Henry looked up towards the west.

'There are clouds upon the sky,'—he said—'and the sun has dropped below them;—but there is a streak of yellow light, near to the line of the mountain, that our wise people say is a sign that the sun will rise in beauty to-morrow.'

'There is a light beyond the mountain,'—replied Butler, half speaking to himself,—'and it is the best, the only sign I see of a clear to-morrow.—I wish, Henry, it were a brighter beam.'

'Dont you know Gates has passed South?'—said Henry,—'and has some pretty fellows with him, they say. And ar'nt we all mustering here—every man most?—ask Stephen Foster what I am.'

'And what will he tell me?'

'Why, that I am his deputy-corporal in the mounted riflemen.—Stephen is the lieutenant.'

'Oh, I crave your favour, brother officer—good master deputy-corporal, Henry Lindsay!—and does your father allow you to ride in the ranks of the friends of liberty?'

'Sister Mildred persuades him that as I am a mere lad,—as she says,—look at me, major,—a pretty well grown lad, I take it,—there is no harm in my playing soldiers. So, I ride always with Stephen Foster; and Mildred got me this light rifle-carbine. Now, major, I fancy I am pretty nearly as good a marksman as rides in the corps.—Who is this with you?'—asked Henry, looking back at Robinson, who loitered some distance in the rear purposely to avoid what might be deemed an intrusion upon the private conference of the two friends.

'That is a famous soldier, Henry; he was at the siege of Charleston, and, last year, at Savannah. He has had some hard blows, and can tell you more of war than you have ever read in all your studies.'

'He wears a curious uniform,'—said Henry,—'for a regular soldier. What is his name?'

'Galbraith Robinson—or Horse Shoe Robinson,—to

give him his most popular distinction. But it would be well to keep his name secret.'

'I have heard of Horse Shoe,'—said Henry, with an expression of great interest.—'So, this is the man, himself?—From all reports he is as brave as'—

'As who?'—asked Butler, smiling at the tone of wonder with which Henry spoke.—

'As Caius Marcius Coriolanus, who, I make no doubt, major, was about the bravest man in the books.'

Butler laughed, and applauded the young martialist for his discrimination.

The road from the foot of the hill pursued the left, or northern, bank of the Rockfish which shot along, with a rapid flood, over the rocks that lay scattered in its bed;—and the gush of whose flight fell upon the ear, like the loud tones of the wind. From either margin it was shaded by huge sycamores whose tops, at this twilight hour, were marked in broad lines upon the fading sky, and whose wide spreading boughs met, from side to side, over the middle of the stream, throwing a deeper night upon the clear and transparent waters. The valley was closely bound by high, precipitous hills, whose steep crags and narrow passes seemed to echo and prolong the gush of the stream, that was now mingled with the occasional lowing of cattle, the shriek of the owl, and the frequent hoarse scream of the whip-poor-will.

When our party had advanced about a mile along this road, Henry Lindsay took his bugle and blew a blast which seemed to dance in its reverberations from one side of the river to the other.

'Mildred knows my signal,'—said he;—'that is the scout's warning:—Cavalry approaches:—Dress your line: Prepare to receive a general officer.'

'Henry, pray drop your military phrase, and tell me, what this means?'—said Butler.

'Ride on, till you arrive beneath the Fawn's Tower. Wait for me there. I will give you a signal when I approach: and trust me for a faithful messenger. The river is deep at the rock: but you will find a boat fastened to this bank.—When you hear my signal, come across.—Mrs. Dimock's is only another mile;—and, I'll warrant, the old

lady will make you comfortable. Love, they say, major,'—added Henry, sportively,—'is meat and drink and a blanket to boot; but for all that, Mrs. Dimock's will not be amiss—especially for Horse Shoe, who, I take it, will have the roughest time of the party.—If love is a blanket, Mr. Robinson,'—Henry continued, addressing himself to that worthy,—'it doesn't cover two, you know.'—

'To my thinking, young sir,'—replied Horse Shoe, with a laugh,—'it wouldn't fold so cleverly in a knapsack.'

'Now that I have given my orders,'—said Henry,—'and done my duty,—I must leave you;—for my road lies across the ford here. Where are my hounds?—Hylas, Bell, Blanch!—you puppies, where are you?'—

Here Henry blew another note, which was immediately responded to by the hounds: and, plunging into the rapid and narrow stream, followed by the dogs who swam close behind him, he was seen, the next moment, through the twilight, galloping up the opposite hill, as he called out his 'good night' to his friends.

As soon as Henry had disappeared the other two pricked their steeds forward at a faster pace. The rapid flow of the river, as they advanced along its bank, began to change into a more quiet current, as if some obstruction below had dammed up the water, rendering it deep and still. Upon this tranquil mirror, the pale crescent of the moon and the faintly peeping stars were reflected; and the flight of the fire-fly was traced, by his own light and its redoubled image, upon the same surface.

The high toppling cliff of the Fawn's Tower, that jutted forth like a parapet above the road, soon arrested the attention of Butler; and at its base the great chestnut flung abroad his 'vast magnificence of leaves,' almost in emulation of the aspiring crag.

'We have reached our appointed ground,'—said Butler.—'I shall want my cloak, Galbraith: the dews begin to chill my limbs.'—

They dismounted, and Butler threw his cloak around his shoulders. Then, in a thoughtful, musing state of mind, he strolled slowly along the bank of the river, till he was temporarily lost to view in the thick shades and

sombre scenery around him. Robinson, having secured the horses, sat himself down at the foot of the chestnut, unwilling to interrupt by conversation the anxious state of feeling, which he had the shrewdness to perceive predominated in Butler's mind.

CHAPTER IV.

A MEETING OF LOVERS,—SOME INSIGHT INTO THE FUTURE.

THE twilight had subsided and given place to a beautiful night. The moon had risen above the tree tops, and now threw her level rays upon the broad face of the massive pile of rocks forming the Fawn's Tower, and lit up, with a silvery splendour, the foliage that clothed the steep cliff, and the almost perpendicular hill in its neighbourhood. On the opposite side of the river, a line of beech and sycamore trees, that grew almost at the water's edge, threw a dark shadow upon the bank. Through these, at intervals, the bright moonlight fell upon the earth, and upon the quiet and deep stream. The woods were vocal with the whispering noises that give discord to the nights of summer; yet, was there a stillness in the scene that invited grave thoughts, and recalled to Butler's mind some painful emotions that belonged to his present condition.

'How complicated and severe are those trials,'—such was the current of his meditations,—'which mingle private grief with public misfortune:—that double current of ill which runs, on one side, to the overthrow of a nation's happiness, and, on the other, to the prostration of the individual who labours in the cause! What a struggle have I to encounter, between my duty to my country, and my regard for those tender relations that still more engross my affections, nor less earnestly appeal to my manhood for defence! Upon the common quarrel I have already staked my life and fortune, and find myself wrapt up in its most perilous obligations. That cause has enough in it to employ and perplex the strongest mind, and to invoke the full devotion of a head and heart that are exempt from all other solicitude: yet am I embarrassed with per-

sonal cares that are woven into the very web of my existence;—that have planted themselves beside the fountain of my affections, and which, if they be rudely torn from me, would leave behind—but a miserable and hopeless wreck.—My own Mildred!—to what sad trials have I brought your affection;—and how nobly hast thou met them!—

‘Man lives in the contentious crowd;—he struggles for the palm that thousands may award, and far-speeding renown may rend the air with the loud huzza of praise. His is the strife of the theatre where the world are spectators;—and multitudes shall glorify his success, or lament his fall, or cheer him in the pangs of death.—But woman, gentle, silent, sequestered—thy triumphs are only for the heart that loves thee,—thy deepest griefs have no comforter but the secret communion of thine own pillow!’—

Whilst Butler, who had now returned beneath the cliff of the Fawn’s Tower, was absorbed in this silent musing, his comrade was no less occupied with his own cares. The sergeant had acquired much of that forecast, in regard to small comforts, which becomes, in some degree, an instinct in those whose profession exposes them to the assaults of wind and weather. Tobacco, in his reckoning, was one of the most indispensable muniments of war; and he was, accordingly, seldom without a good stock of this commodity. A corn cob, at any time, furnished him the means of carving the bowl of a pipe; whilst, in his pocket, he carried a slender tube of reed which, being united to the bowl, formed a smoking apparatus, still familiar to the people of the country, and which, to use the sergeant’s own phrase, ‘couldn’t be touched for sweetness by the best pipe the very Queen of the Dutch herself ever smoked: and that,’—he was in the habit of adding,—‘must be, as I take it, about the tenderest thing for a whiff that the Dutchman knowed how to make.’—

A flint and steel—part also of his gear—now served to ignite his tobacco, and he had been, for some time past, sedately scanning the length and breadth of his own fancies, which were, doubtless, rendered the more sublime, by the mistiness that a rich volume of smoke had shed

across his vision and infused into the atmosphere around his brain.

'Twelve shillings and nine pence,'—were the first words which became audible to Butler in the depth of his reverie.—'That, major,'—said the sergeant, who had been rummaging his pocket, and counting over a handful of coin,—'is exactly the amount I have spent since this time last night. I paid it to the old lady of the Swan, at Charlottesville,—taking in six pence for mending your bridle rein.—Since you must make me paymaster for our march, I am obliged to square accounts every night. My noddle wont hold two days reckoning. It gets scrimped and flustered with so many numberings, that I lose the count clean out.'—

'It is of little consequence, Galbraith,'—replied Butler, seeking to avoid his companion's interruption.

'Squaring up, and smoothing off, and bringing out this and that shilling straight to a penny, dont come natural to me,'—continued Robinson, too intent upon his reckoning to observe the disinclination of Butler to a parley,—'money matters are not in my line. I take to them as dis-understandingly as Gill Bentley did to the company's books, when they made him Orderly on the Waccamaw picquet. For Gill, in the first place, couldn't write,—and, in the next place, if he could'a done that, he never larnt to read,—so, you may suppose what a beautiful puzzleification he had of it to keep the guard roster straight.'

'Sergeant, look if yonder boat is loose;—I shall want it presently,'—said Butler, still giving no ear to his comrade's gossip.—

'It is tied by an easy knot to the root of the tree,'—said Robinson, as he returned from the examination.

'Thank you,'—added Butler with more than usual abstractedness.—

'Something, major, seems to press upon your sperits to night,'—said the sergeant, in the kindest tones of inquiry. 'If I could lend a hand to put any thing, that mought happen to have got crooked, into its right place again, you know, major Butler, I wouldn't be slow to do it, when you say the word.'—

'I would trust my life to you, Galbraith, sooner than to

any man living,'—replied the other, with an affectionate emphasis:—'But you mistake me—I am not heavy at heart, though a little anxious, sergeant, at what has brought me here.—Comrade,'—he added as he approached the sergeant, upon whose broad shoulder he familiarly laid his hand, with a smile,—'you will keep a fellow soldier's counsel?'—

'As I keep my heart in my body,'—interrupted Galbraith.

'I am sure of it;—even as you keep your faith to your country, my true and worthy brother,'—added Butler with animation—'and that is, with no less honesty than a good man serves his God.—Then, Galbraith, bear it in mind—I have come here for the sake of a short meeting with one that I love—as you would have a good soldier love the lady of his soul. You will hereafter speak of nothing that may fall within your notice. It concerns me deeply that this meeting should be secret.'

'Major, I will have neither eyes nor ears, if it concerns you to keep any thing that might chance to come to my knowledge, private.'—

'It is not for myself, sergeant, I bespeak this caution:—I have nothing to conceal from you;—but there is a lady who is much interested in our circumspection.—I have given you a long and solitary ride on her account, and may hereafter ask other service from you.—You shall not find it more irksome, Galbraith, to stand by a comrade in love, than you have ever found it in war,—and that, I know, you think not much.'—

'The war comes naturally enough to my hand,'—replied Galbraith,—'but as for the love part, major, excepting so far as carrying a message, or, in case of a runaway, keeping off a gang of pestiferous, intermeddlers,—or watching, for a night or so, under a tree—or any thing, indeed, in the riding and running, or watching, or scrimmaging line—I say, excepting these, my service moughn't turn to much account. I can't even play a fiddle at a wedding,—and I've not the best tongue for making head way amongst the women. Howsomdever, major, you may set me down for a volunteer on the first forlorn hope you may have occasion for.'

'Mr. Lindsay lives on the hill across the river. There

are reasons why I cannot go to this house;—and his daughter, Galbraith, is an especial friend to us and to our cause.’—

‘I begin to see into it,’—interrupted the sergeant, laughing,—‘you have a notion of showing the old gentleman the same trick you played off upon Lord Howe’s provost marshal, when you was lieutenant at Valley Forge, touching your stealing away his prisoner, captain Roberts. That was a night affair, too.—Well, the best wife a man can have, major, is the woman that takes to him through fire and water.—There was colonel Gardiner, that stole his wife just in that way,—against all opposition of both father and mother;—and a better woman never stitched up a seam, to my knowledge and belief.’—

‘I have no thought of such an enterprise, sergeant,’—said Butler,—‘our purpose, for the present, must be confined to a short visit. We are houseless adventurers, Galbraith, and have little to offer to sweetheart or wife that might please a woman’s fancy.’—

‘When a woman loves a man,—especially a sodger, replied the sergeant,—‘she sets as little store by house and home as the best of us.—Still, it is a wise thing to give the creatures the chance of peace, before you get to tangling them with families.—Hark—I hear something like footsteps on t’other side of the river! Mister Henry must be on his march.’—

After an interval, a low whistle issued from the opposite bank, and, in a moment, Butler was in the skiff, pushing his way through the sparkling waters.

As the small boat, in which he stood upright, shot from the bright moonlight into the shade of the opposite side, he could obscurely discern Mildred Lindsay leaning on her brother’s arm, as they both stood under the thick foliage of a large beech. And scarcely had the bow struck upon the pebbly margin, before he bounded from it up the bank, and was, in the next instant, locked in the embrace of one whose affection he valued above all earthly possessions.

When that short interval had passed away, in which neither Mildred nor Arthur could utter speech; during which the lady leant her head upon her lover’s bosom, in

that fond familiarity which plighted faith is allowed to justify in the most modest maiden,—sobbing the while in the intensity of her emotions,—she then at last, as she slowly regained her self-possession, said, in a soft and melancholy voice, in which there was nevertheless a tone of playfulness.

‘I am a foolish girl, Arthur. I can boast like a blustering coward, when there is nothing to fear; and yet I weep, like a true woman, at the first trial of my courage.’

‘Ah, my dear Mildred, you are a brave girl,’—replied Butler, as he held both of her hands and looked fondly into her face,—‘and a true and a tried girl. You have come kindly to me,—and ever, like a blessed and gentle spirit of good, are prompt to attend me through every mischance. It is a long and weary time, love, since last we met.’—

‘It is very,—very long, Arthur.’—

‘And we are still as far off, Mildred, from our wishes as at first we were.’—

‘Even so,’—said Mildred sorrowfully.—‘A year of pain drags heavily by, and brings no hope. Oh, Arthur, what have I suffered in the thought that your life is so beset with dangers! I muse upon them with a childish fear, that was not so before our last meeting. They rise to disturb my daily fancies, and night finds them inhabiting my pillow. I was so thankful, that you escaped that dreary siege of Charleston!’

‘Many a poor and gallant fellow soldier there bit his lip with a chafed and peevish temper,’—said Butler;—‘but the day will come, Mildred, when we may yet carry a prouder head to the field of our country’s honour.’—

‘And your share,’—interrupted Mildred,—‘will ever be to march in the front rank. In spite of all your perils past,—your hard service, which has known no holiday,—your fatigues, that, I have sometimes feared, would break down your health,—and in spite, too, of the claims, Arthur, that your poor Mildred has upon you, you are even now again bound upon some bold adventure that must separate us—ah, perhaps, forever! Our fate has malice in it. Ever beginning some fresh exploit!’—

‘You would not have your soldier bear himself other-

wise than as a true knight, who would win and wear his lady-love by good set blows when there was need for them?"—

'If I were the genius that conjured up this war, I would give my own true knight a breathing space. He should pipe and dance between whiles,'—replied Mildred sportively.

'He that puts his sickle into this field amongst the reapers,'—said Butler, with a thoughtful earnestness,— 'should not look back from his work.'

'No, no,—though my heart break while I say it—for, in truth, I am very melancholy, notwithstanding I force a beggar's smile upon my cheek—no, I would not have you stay or stand, Arthur, until you have seen this wretched quarrel at an end.—I praised your first resolve,—loved you for it,—applauded and cheered you:—I will not selfishly now, for the sake of my weak, womanish apprehension, say one word to withhold your arm.'

'And you are still,'—said Butler,— 'that same resolute enthusiast, that I found in the young and eloquent beauty who captivated my worthless heart, when the war first drew the wild spirits of the country together under our free banner?'—

'The same foolish, conceited, heady, prattling truant, Arthur, that first took a silly liking to your pompous strut, and made a hero to her imagination out of a boasting ensign:—the same in all my follies, and in all my faults;—only altered in one quality.'

'And what, my gentle and lovely lady,—pray, what is that one quality?'—

'I will not tell you,'—said Mildred carelessly.— 'I would make you vainer than you are.'

'It is not well to hide a kind thought from me, Mildred.'

'Indeed it is not, Arthur. And so, I will muster courage to speak it,'—said the confiding girl with vivacity, after a short pause during which she hung fondly upon her lover's arm:—and, then suddenly changing her mood, she proceeded in a tone of deep and serious enthusiasm;— 'it is, that since that short, eventful and most solemn meeting, I have loved you, Arthur, with feelings that I did

not know until then were mine. My busy fancy has followed you in all your wanderings;—painted with stronger hues than nature gives to any real scene the difficulties and disasters that might cross your path;—noted the seasons with a nervous acuteness of remark, from very faint-heartedness at the thought that they might blight your health or bring you some discomfort.—I have pored over the accounts of battles, the march of armies, the tales of prisoners relating the secrets of their prisons;—studied the plans of generals and statesmen,—as the newspapers or common rumour brought them to my knowledge—with an interest that has made those around me say I was sadly changed.—It was all because I had grown cowardly, and feared even my own shadow. Oh, Arthur, I am not indeed what I was.’—

The solemnity, force and feeling with which Mildred gave utterance to these words, strangely contrasted with the light and gay tone in which she had commenced;—but her thoughts had now fallen into a current that bore her forward into one of those bursts of excited emotion, which were characteristic of her temper, and which threw a peculiar energy and eloquence into her manner. Butler, struck by the rising warmth of her enunciation, and swayed, in part, by the painful reflections to which her topic gave rise, replied, in a state of feeling scarcely less solemn than her own.

‘Ah, Mildred,’—and as he spoke, he parted her hair upon her pale forehead, and kissed it,—‘dearest girl, the unknown time to come has no cup of suffering for me that I would not hold a cheap purchase for one moment like this. Even a year of painful absence past, and a still more solicitous one to come, may be gallantly and cheerfully borne when blessed with the fleeting interval of this night. To hear your faith,—which though I never dwelt upon it but with a confidence that I have held it most profane to doubt—still, to hear it avowed from your own lips, now again and again, repeating what you have often breathed before, and in letter after letter, written down—it falls upon my heart, Mildred, like some good gift from heaven, specially sent to revive and quicken my resolution in all the toils and labours that yet await me.

There must be good in store for such a heart as thine; and, trusting to this faith, I will look to the future with a buoyant temper.'—

'The future,'—said Mildred, as she lifted her eyes to the pale moon that now sheeted with its light her whole figure, as she and her lover strayed beyond the shade of the beech,—'I almost shudder when I hear that word.—We live but in the present:—that, Arthur, is, at least, our own—poor as we are in almost all beside.—That future is a perplexed and tangled riddle—a dreadful uncertainty, in the contemplation of which I grow superstitious.—Such ill omens are about us!—My father's inexorable will, so headstrong, so unconscious of the pain it gives me;—his rooted, yes, his fatal aversion to you;—my thralldom here, where, like a poor bird checked by a cord, I chafe myself by fluttering on the verge of my prison bounds: and then, the awful perils that continually impend over *your* head:—all these are more than weak imaginings;—they are the realities of my daily life, and give me, what I am almost ashamed to confess, a sad and boding spirit.'—

'Nay, nay, dearest Mildred!—Away with all these unreasonable reckonings!'—replied Butler, with a manner that too plainly betrayed the counterfeit of mirth.—'Seclusion, I would swear, had dealt unworthily with you. It has almost turned thee into a downright sentimental woman. I will have none of this stepping to the verge of melancholy. You were accustomed to cheer me with sunny and warm counsel;—and you must not forget it was yourself who taught me to strike aside the waves of fortune with a glad temper. The fates can have no spite against one so good as thou art! Time may bear us along like a rough trotting horse; and our journey may have its dark night, its quagmires, and its jack'o-lanterns,—but there will come a ruddy morning at last,—a smoother road, and an easier gait. And thou, my girl, shalt again instruct me how to win a triumph over the ills of life.'

'And we will be happy, Arthur,—because all around us will be so,'—added Mildred, catching the current of Butler's thoughts, with that ready versatility which eminently showed the earnestness and devotion of her feelings.—'Ah, may heaven grant this boon, and bring these dreams

to life!—I think, Arthur, I should be happier now, if I could but be near you in your wanderings. Gladly would I follow you through all the dangers of the war!”

“That were indeed, love, a trial past your faculty to endure.—No, no, Mildred—she who would be a soldier’s wife, should learn the soldier’s philosophy—to look with a resigned submission on the present events, and trust to heaven for the future. Your share in this struggle is to commune with your own heart in solitude, and teach it patience. Right nobly have you thus far borne that grievous burden! The sacrifice that you have made,—its ever present and unmitigated weight, silently and sleeplessly inflicting its slow pains upon your free and generous spirit—that, Mildred, is the chief and most galling of my cares.”—

“This weary war—this weary war,”—breathed Mildred, in a pensive under key,—“when will it be done?”

“The longest troubles have their end,”—replied Butler;—“and men, at last, spent with the vexations of their own mischief, fly, by a selfish instinct, into the bosom of peace. God will prosper our enterprise, and bring our battered ship into a fortunate haven.”—

“How little like it seems it now,”—returned Mildred.—“The general sorrow, alone, might well weigh down the stoutest heart. That cause which you have made mine, Arthur,—to which you have bestowed your life, and which, for *your* sake,”—she added proudly,—“should have this feeble arm of mine, could it avail,—is it not even now trembling on the verge of ruin?—Have not your letters, one after another, told me of the sad train in which misfortunes have thickened upon the whole people?—of defeat, both north and south, and, at this very time, of disgraceful mutiny of whole regiments under the very eye of Washington—that Washington who loves his country and her soldiers, as a husband loves his bride, or a father his children. Have not those, to whom we all looked for champions, turned into mere laggards in the war for freedom?—Oh, Arthur, do you not remember that these are the thoughts, the very words, which were penned by your own hand, for my especial meditation?”—

How can I but fear that the good end is still far off?—
How can I but feel some weight upon my heart!'

'You have grown overwise, Mildred, in these ruminations. I am to blame for this, that in my peevish humour, vexed with the crosses of the day, I should have written on such topics to one so sensitive as yourself!'

'Still it is true, Arthur,—all report confirms it.'—

'These things do not become your entertainment, Mildred.—Leave the public care to us. There are bold hearts, love, and strong arms yet to spare for this quarrel. We have not yet so exhausted our mines of strength, but that much rough ore still lies unturned to the sun, and many an uncouth lump of metal remains to be fashioned for serviceable use. History tells of many a rebound from despondency, so sudden and unreckoned, that the wisest men could see in it no other spring than the decree of God.—He will fight the battle of the weak, and set the right upon a sure foundation.'—

'The country rings,'—said Mildred, again taking the more cheerful hue of her lover's hopes, and following out, with an affectionate sympathy, his tone of thought,—
'with anticipation of victory from Gates' southern march.'—

'That may turn out to be a broken reed,'—interrupted Butler, as if thinking aloud and struck by Mildred's reference to a subject that had already engrossed his thoughts;—'they may be deceived. Washington would have put a different man upon that service. I would have a leader in such a war, wary, watchful, humble—diffident as well as brave:—I fear Gates is not so.'—

'Then I trust, Arthur,'—exclaimed Mildred, with anxious alacrity,—'that your present expedition does not connect you with his fortunes!'

'I neither follow his colours, nor partake of his counsels,'—replied Butler.—'Still my motions may not be exempt from the influence of his failure or success. The enemy, you are aware, has possessed himself of every post of value in South Carolina and Georgia. I go commissioned to advise with discreet and prudent men upon the means to shake off this odious domination. So far only, and remotely too, I am a fellow-labourer with Gates.'

There are gallant spirits now afoot, Mildred, to strip these masters of their power. My office is to aid their enterprise.'

'If you needs must go, Arthur,—I have no word to say.—You will leave behind you an aching heart, that morning, noon, and night, wearies heaven with its prayers for your safety.—Alas, I have no other aid to give!—How soon—how soon,'—she said with a voice that faltered with the question,—'does your duty compel you to leave me?'—

'To-morrow's sunrise, love, must find me forth upon my way.'

'To-morrow, Arthur?—so quickly to part!'—

'I dare not linger, not even for the rich blessing of thy presence.'

'And the utmost length of your journey?'—

'Indeed, I know not.—At present my farthest aim is Ninety-six and Augusta—it much depends upon the pleasure of our proud and wilful masters.'

Mildred stood for some moments looking upon the ground in profound silence. Her bosom heaved with a sad emotion.—

'It is a dangerous duty,'—said she, at last.—'I cannot speak my apprehension at the thought of your risks amongst the fierce and treacherous men that overrun the country to which you travel.'

'These perils are exaggerated by distance,'—returned Butler.—'A thousand expedients of protection and defence occur when present, that the absent cannot fancy. It is a light service, Mildred,—and may more securely be performed with a gay heart than with a sad one. I pray you, do not suffer that active imagination of yours to invest the every day adventures of your poor soldier with a romantic interest, of which they are not worthy. I neither slay giants, nor disenchant ladies, nor yoke captive griffins together.—No, no, I shall outrun some overfed clown, and outwit some simple boobies,—and, perhaps, soil my boots in a great slough,—and then hasten back, love, to boast of my marvels to the credulous ear of my own sweet lady, who, I warrant, will think me a most preposterous hero.'

'How can you laugh, Arthur?—And yet, I would not have you catch my foolish sadness either.'—

'I have with me, besides, Mildred, a friend good at need; one Galbraith Robinson, a practised and valiant soldier, who sits on yonder bank. He is to be the companion of my journey;—he is shrewd, vigilant, and cautious—an inhabitant, moreover, of the district to which I am bound; his wisdom can do much for my success. Then I travel, too, in peaceful guise. My business is more concerned with negotiation than with battle.'

'It is a waylaid path, Arthur'—said Mildred, in the same faint voice with which she had spoken before.—

'Never take it so heavily, my love!'—exclaimed Butler, familiarly seizing her hand, whose trembling now betrayed her agitation,—'it is the mere sport of the war to be upon a running service, where a light stratagem, or so, will baffle a set of dull-pated clodpoles! I scarcely deem it a venture, to dodge through a forest, where every man flies from his neighbour, out of mutual distrust. These fellows have brought themselves upon such bad terms with their own consciences, that they start like thieves at the waving of a bullrush.'

'They would be the more cruel,'—replied Mildred,—'if some ill luck should throw you into their power. If that should happen,'—she added, and for a while she hesitated to speak, as a tear fell upon Butler's hand—'if that should happen—I cannot bear the thought.'—

'They dare offer me no wrong, Mildred.—'The chances of battle are sufficiently various to compel even the victors to pursue the policy of humanity to prisoners. The conqueror of to-day may himself be a captive to-morrow, and a bloody reprisal would await his barbarity.—Again, let me remind you, these are not fit topics for your meditation.'—

'They are topics for my heart, Arthur, and will not be driven from it.—If your lot should put you in the power of the enemy—the name of Mildred Lindsay, and the relation you bear her, whispered in their ears, may, perhaps, unlock their charity. My father has many friends in those ranks,—and it may be that I am not unknown to some of them: oh, remember that!'—

'You have little need to teach me to think or speak of Mildred Lindsay,'—said Butler, eagerly. 'I cannot forget that name. But I may well doubt its charm upon the savage bull dogs who are now baiting our citizens in Carolina;—those ruthless partizans who are poisoning the fountains of contentment at every fire-side. It is not a name to conjure evil spirits with.'—

'Major Butler,'—said Henry, who, during this long interval, had been strolling backward and forward, like a sentinel, at some distance from his sister and her lover, and who, with the military punctilio of a soldier on duty, forebore even to listen to what he could not have helped overhearing, if it had not been for humming a tune.—'Major, I don't like to make or meddle with things that don't belong to me—but you and Mildred have been talking long enough to settle the course of a whole campaign. And as my father thinks he can't be too careful of Mildred, and doesn't like her walking about after night-fall, I shouldn't be surprised if a messenger were despatched for us:—only I think that man Tyrrel is hatching some plot with him to-night, and may keep him longer in talk than usual.'

'Who is Tyrrel?'—inquired Butler.

'One that I wish had been in his grave before he had ever seen my father,'—answered Mildred with a bitter vehemence. 'He is a wicked emissary of the royal party sent here to entrap my dear father into their toils.—Such as it has ever been his fate to be cursed with from the beginning of the war;—but this Tyrrel, the most hateful of them all.'

'Alas, alas, your poor father!—Mildred, what deep sorrow do I feel that he and I should be so estranged. I could love him,—counsel with him,—honour him, with a devotion that should outrun your fondest wish. His generous nature has been played upon, cheated, abused—and I, in whom fortune and inclination should have raised him a friend, have been made the victim of his perverted passion.'

'True,—true,'—exclaimed Mildred, bursting into tears, and resting her head against her lover's breast,—'I can find

courage to bear all but this—I am most unhappy:—and for some moments she sobbed audibly.

‘The thought has sometimes crossed me,’—said Butler,—‘that I would go to your father and tell him all. It offends my self-respect, to be obliged to practise concealment towards one who should have a right to know all that concerns a daughter so dear to him.—Even now, if I may persuade you to it, I will go, hand in hand with you, and, with humble reverence, place myself before him and divulge all that has passed between us.’

‘No, no, Arthur, no’—ejaculated Mildred with the most earnest determination. ‘It will not come to good. You do not understand my father’s feeling. The very sight of you would rouse him into frenzy:—there is no name which might fall upon his ear with deeper offence than yours. Not yet, Arthur,—the time has not yet come.’

‘I have been patient’—said Butler—‘patient, Mildred, for your sake’—

‘To try him now’—continued Mildred, whose feelings still ran, with a heady impetuosity, upon this newly-awakened and engrossing topic—‘now, in the very depth of his bitterest aversion to what he terms an impious rebellion, and whilst his heart is yet moved with an almost preternatural hate against all who uphold the cause—and to you, especially, above whose head there hovers, in his belief, some horrid impending curse that shall bring desolation upon him and all who claim an interest in his blood—no, no,—it must not be!’—

‘Another year of pent-up vexation, self-reproach and anxious concealment must then glide by—and perhaps another’—said Butler.—‘Well, I must be content to bear it—though, in the mean time, my heart bleed for you, Mildred;—it is a painful trial.’—

‘For good or for evil our vow is now registered in heaven’—replied Mildred,—‘and we must abide the end.’

‘I would not have it other than it is, dearest girl—except this stern resolve of your father—not for the world’s wealth’—said Butler warmly.—‘But you spoke of this Tyrrel—what manner of man is he?—How might I know him?’—

‘To know him would answer no good end, Arthur.

His soul is absorbed in stratagem, and my dear father is its prey. I too am grievously tormented by him:—but it is no matter,—I need not vex your ear with the tale of his annoyance.’—

‘Indeed!’—exclaimed Butler with a sudden expression of resentment.

‘All that concerns my father, concerns me,’—said Mildred.—‘It is my evil destiny, Arthur, to be compelled to endure the associations of men, whose principles, habits, purposes are all at war with my own. Alas, such are now my father’s constant companions! This man Tyrrel,—whose very name is a cheat put on, I doubt not, to conceal him from observation—goes farther than the rest in the boldness of his practice. I have some misgiving that he is better acquainted with the interest you take in me, than we might suspect possible to a stranger—I fear him. And then, Arthur, it is my peculiar misery that he has lately set up a disgusting pretension to my regard.—Oh! I could give him, if my sex had strength to strike, the dagger, sooner than squander upon him one kind word.—Yet am I obliged by circumstance to observe a strained courtesy towards him, which, frugal as it is, makes me an unwilling hypocrite to my own heart.’—

‘Tyrrel,’—ejaculated Butler,—‘Tyrrel!—I have heard no such name abroad!’—then, muttering a deep curse, as he bit his lip with passion, he added—‘Oh, that I could face this man,—or penetrate his foul purpose!—How is it likely I might meet him?’

‘You shall have no temptation to a quarrel,’—said Mildred:—‘your quick resentment would but give activity to his venom.—For the sake of my peace, Arthur, and of your own, inquire no further. Time may disclose more than rash pursuit.’

‘Leave that to sister Mildred and myself, major,’—said Henry, who listened with great interest to this conversation,—‘I have *my* eye upon him—let that satisfy you:—and when sister Mildred puts up the game, depend upon it, I will bring him down.’

‘Thanks, thanks dear Henry!—I can trust you for a ready friend, and will even follow your good advice. A more favorable season for this concern may soon arrive—meantime, I will bear this hint in mind.’—

Again Henry made an appeal to the lovers to bring their conference to an end. It was a sorrowful moment, the events of which were brief, earnest and impassioned,—and such as a dull scribbler, like myself, might easily mar in the telling:—yet they were such as zealous and eager natures, who have loved with an intense and absorbing love, and who have parted in times of awful danger and uncertainty may, perchance, be able to picture to themselves, when they recal the most impressive incident of their lives to memory. I will only say, that, in that dark shade where the beech tree spread his canopy of leaves over the cool bank, and marked his shadow's profile on the green sward—that grassy sward, on which 'the constant moon' lit up the dewy lamps, hung by the spider on blade and leaf;—and in that silent time, when the distant water-fall came far-sounding on the ear; when sleepless insects chirped in the thicket, and dogs, at some remote homestead, howled bugle-like to the moon;—and in that chill hour, when Mildred drew her kerchief close around her dew-besprinkled shoulders, whilst Arthur, fondly and affectionately, half enveloped her in the folds of a military cloak, as he whispered words of tender parting in her ear, and imprinted a kiss upon her cheek; and when, moreover, Henry's teeth chattered like a frozen warder's—then it was, and there, that this enthusiastic girl again pledged her unalterable devotion to the man of her waking thoughts and nightly dreams,—come weal come woe, whatever might betide!—and the soldier paid back the pledge, with new ardour and endearment, in the strong language that came unstudied from the heart, meaning all that he said, and rife with a feeling beyond the reach of words. And, after 'mony a locked and fond embrace,' full tearfully, and lingeringly, and, in phrase oft repeated, the two bade 'farewell,' and invoked God's blessing each upon the other;—and then, not without looking back, and breathing a fresh prayer of blessings, they separated on their dreary way,—Mildred retiring, as she had come, on the arm of her brother,—and Butler, springing hurriedly into the skiff and directing its swift passage to the middle of the stream, where, after a pause

to enable him to discern the last footsteps of his mistress, as her form glided into the obscure distance, he sighed a low 'God bless her,' then resumed his oar, and sturdily drove his boat against the 'opponent bank.'

CHAPTER V.

A COMFORTABLE INN, AND A GOOD LANDLADY.—THE MISFORTUNES OF
HEROES DO NOT ALWAYS DESTROY THE APPETITE.

As soon as Butler landed from the skiff, he threw his cloak into the hands of the sergeant; then, with a disturbed haste, sprang upon his horse,—and, commanding Robinson to follow, galloped along the road down the river, as fast as the nature of the ground and the obscurity of the hour would allow. A brief space brought them to the spot where the road crossed the stream, immediately in the vicinity of the widow Dimock's little inn, which might here be discerned ensconced beneath the cover of the opposite hill. The low-browed wooden building, quietly stationed some thirty paces off the road, was so adumbrated in the shelter of a huge willow, that the journeyer, at such an hour as this, might perchance pass the spot unconsciously by, were it not for an insulated and somewhat haggard sign post that, like a hospitable seeker of strangers, stood hard by the road side, and there displayed a shattered emblem in the guise of a large blue ball, a little decayed by wind and weather—which said Blue Ball, without superscription or device, was universally interpreted to mean 'Entertainment for man and horse by the widow Dimock.'—The moonlight fell with a broad lustre upon the sign post and its pendant globe—and our travellers, beside, could descry, through the drapery of the willow, a window, of some rear building of the inn, richly illuminated by what, from the redness of the light, might be conjectured to be a bundle of blazing faggots.

As the horses had, immediately upon entering the ford, compelled their masters to a halt, whilst they thrust their noses some six inches deep into the water, and drank with

the greediness of a long neglected thirst, it was with no equivocal self-gratulation that Robinson directed his eye to the presignifications of good cheer which were now before him. Butler had spoke 'never a word,' and the sergeant's habits of subordination, as well as an honest sympathy in what he guessed to be the griefs of his superior officer, had constrained him to a respectful silence. The sergeant, however, was full of thoughts which, more than once during the gallop from the Fawn's Tower, he was on the point of uttering by way of consolation to Butler, and which nothing prevented but that real delicacy of mind that lies at the bottom of a kind nature, and inhabits the shaggy breast of the rustic, at least, full as often as it lodges in the heart of the trim worldling.—The present halt seemed, in Horse Shoe's reckoning, not only to furnish a pretext to speak, but, in some degree, to render it a duty; and, in truth, an additional very stimulating subject presented itself to our good squire, in his instantaneous conviction that the glare from the tavern window had its origin in some active operation which, at this late hour, might be going on at the kitchen chimney:—to understand the full pungency of which consideration, it is necessary to inform my reader, that Robinson had, for some time past, been yielding himself to certain doubts, whether his friend and himself might not arrive at the inn, at too late an hour to hope for much despatch in the preparation for supper. In this state of feeling, partly bent to cheer the spirits of Butler, and partly to express his satisfaction at the prospect of his own comfort, he broke forth in the following terms—

"God bless all widows that set themselves down by the road side, is my worst wish!—and, in particular, I pray for good luck to the widow Dimock, for an orderly sort of body, which I have no doubt she is;—and keeps good hours,—to judge by the shine of the kitchen fire which is blazing yonder in the rear,—and which, to tell truth, major, I began to be afeard would be as dead, by this time o' night, as the day the hearth stone was first laid. She deserves to be spoken of as a praiseworthy woman. And, moreover, I should say she has popped her house down in a most legible situation, touching our day's

march, by which I mean, it isn't one step too near a reasonable bed hour. I count it lucky, major, on your account,—and although it isn't for me to give advice in woman affairs—for I know the creatures do try the grit and edge of a man amazingly, sometimes—yet, if I mought say what was running in my head fit for a gentleman and an officer like you to do in such a tribulation, it would be this—drop thinking and chawing over your troubles, and take them with a light heart, as things that's not to be mended by a solemnolly long-facedness. A good victual's meal and a fair night's rest would make another man of you. That's my observation;—and I remember once to hear you say the same yourself, upon occasion of your losing the baggage wagons last fall on the Beaufort convoy:—you ha'n't forgot it, major?—

'Thank you, thank you, sergeant. Your counsel is kindly offered and wisely said, and I will follow it. But it is a little hard, fellow soldier,'—added Butler, with something like an approach to jocularly,—'it is a little hard to have one's misfortunes cast in his teeth by a comrade.'—

'I thought it would make you laugh, major!'—replied Robinson, with a good natured solicitude,—'for it wan't in the possibilities of a mortal earthly man to save the baggage; and, I remember, you laughed then, as well as the rest of us, when them pestifarious, filching sheep stealers made off with our dinners:—nobody ever blamed you for it.'

'Ah, Galbraith, you are a good friend—and you shall say what you please to me,'—said Butler, with a returning cheerfulness,—'sorrow is a dull companion to him who feeds it, and an impertinent one to every body beside.—So, ride forward, and we will endeavour to console ourselves with the good cheer of the widow.—And hark, Galbraith,—this Mistress Dimock is an especial friend of mine:—pray you, let her see, by your considerateness towards her, that you are aware of that:—for my sake, good Horse Shoe.'—

The two soldiers soon reached the inn and, having dismounted, Butler aroused the attention of the inmates by a few strokes upon the door with his riding rod.

The reply to this summons was a shrill invitation, in a feminine voice, to 'walk in;' and no sooner had Butler thrown open the door and advanced a few paces into the passage, than the head of an elderly female was seen thrust through the partially expanded doorway of the adjoining room. Another instant, and the dusky figure of Mistress Dimock herself was visible to our travellers.

'What would you be pleased to have, sir?' inquired the dame, with evident distrust at this untimely approach of strangers.

'Accommodation for the night, and whatever you have good to offer a friend, Mistress Dimock.'

'Who are you that ride so late?'—again interrogated the hostess,—'I am cowardly sir, and cautious,—and have reason to be careful who comes into my house;—a poor, unprotected woman, good man.'—

'A light, mother,'—said Butler,—'and you shall know us better.—We are travellers and want food and rest, and would have both with as little trouble to you as possible;—a light will show you an old friend.'

'Wait a moment,'—returned the dame—and then added, as she observed Butler walk into a room on the left.—'Take care, sir, it is risking a fall, to grope in the dark, in a strange house.'—

'The house is not so strange to me as you suppose. Unless you have moved your furniture, I can find the green settee beyond the cupboard,'—said Butler, familiarly striding across the room, and throwing himself into the old commodity he had named.

The landlady, without heeding this evidence of the conversancy of her visiter with the localities of the little parlour, had hastily retreated, and, in a moment afterwards, returned with a light, which, as she held it above her head, while she peered through a pair of spectacles, threw its full effulgence upon the face of her guest.—

'Dear me,—good lack!'—she exclaimed, after a moment's gazing,—'Arthur Butler, o'my conscience! And is it you, Mr. Butler?' Then, putting the candle upon the table, she seized both of his hands and gave them a long and hearty shake.—'That Nancy Dimock shouldn't know your voice—of all others! Where have you been,—and where are you going?—Mercy on me!—what makes you

so late?—And why didn't you let me know you were coming?—I could have made you so much more comfortable. You are chilled with the night air,—and hungry, no doubt.—And you look pale, poor fellow!—You surely couldn't have been at the Dove Cote?—which last interrogatory was expressed with a look of earnest and anxious inquiry.

'No—not there,'—replied Butler almost in a whisper—'alas, my kind dame, not there,'—he added, with a melancholy smile, as he held the hand of the hostess, and shook his head,—'my fortune has, in no jot, improved since I left you almost a year ago.—I broke from you hastily then to resume my share in the war, and I have had nothing but hard blows ever since. The tide, Mistress Dimock, sets sadly against us.'

'Never let your heart fail you,'—exclaimed the landlady—'it isn't in the nature of things for the luck to be forever on the shady side.—Besides, take the good and bad together, you have not been so hardly dealt by, captain Butler.'

'Major Butler, madam, of the second Carolina, continental, reg'lar infantry,'—interrupted Robinson, who had stood by all this time unnoticed,—'*Major* Butler;—the captain has been promoted, by occasion of the wiping out of a few friends from the upper side of the adjutant's roll, in the scrimmage of Fort Moultrie. He is what we call, in common parley, brevetted.'

This annunciation was made by the sergeant with due solemnity, accompanied by an attempt at a bow, which was abundantly stiff and ungraceful.

'My friend sergeant Robinson,'—said Butler,—'I commend him, Mistress Dimock, to your especial favour, both for a trusty comrade, and a most satisfactory and sufficient trencher man.'

'You are welcome and free to the best that's in the house, sergeant,'—said the landlady courtesying,—'and I wish, for your sake, it was as good as your appetite, which ought to be of the best. Mr. Arthur Butler's word is all in all under this roof—and, whether he be captain or major, I promise you, makes no difference with me. Bless me! when I first saw you, major, you was only an

ensign;—then, whisk and away!—and back you come a pretty lieutenant, about my house:—and then, a captain, forsooth!—and now, on the track of that, a major.—It is up-up-up-the ladder, till you will come, one of these days, to be a general,—and too proud, I misdoubt, to look at such a little old woman as me!—hegh, hegh, hegh!—a pinch of snuff, Mr. Arthur;—and here the good dame prolonged her phthisicky laugh for some moments, as she presented a box of Scotch snuff to her guest.—‘But, I’ll engage, promotion never yet made the appetite of a travelling man smaller than before;—so, gentlemen, you will excuse me while I look after your supper.’—

‘The sooner the better, ma’am,’—said Robinson;—‘your night air is a sort of a whetstone to the stomach:—but first, ma’am, I would be obligated to you, if you would let me see the ostler.’—

‘Hut; tut!—and have I been drivelling here all this time,’—exclaimed the dame,—‘without once spending a thought upon your cattle!—Tony,—Tony,—To-ny,—I say,’—almost shrieked the hostess, as she retreated along the passage towards the region of the kitchen, and then back again to the front door.—‘Are you asleep? Look to the gentlemen’s horses;—lead them to the stable, and don’t spare to rub them down;—and give them as much as they can eat.—Where are you, old man?’

‘What’s the use of all this fuss, Missus Dimck? Arn’t I here on the spot, with the creturs in my hand?’—grumbled out an old, stunted negro who answered to the appellation of ostler:—‘Arn’t I getting the baggage off, as fast as I can onbuckle the straps!—I don’t want nobody to tell me when I ought to step out. If a hos could talk he ain’t got nothing new to say to me.—Get out, you varmint,’—he shouted, with a sudden vivacity of utterance, at three or four dogs that were barking around him:—‘Consarn you! What you making such a conbobberation about!—You all throat when you see gentmen coming to the house:—better wait till you see a thief:—bound, you silent enough then—with your tail twixt your legs!—Blossom,—ya sacy slut,—keep quiet, I tell you!’—

In the course of this din and objurgation, the old negro

succeeded in disburdening the horses of their furniture, and was about to lead them to the stable, when Robinson came to give him some directions.

'Mind, old bully, what you are after with them there cattle. Give them not a mouthful for a good hour,—and plenty of fodder about their feet—I'll look at them myself before you shut up.—Throw a handful of salt into the trough, Tony—if that's your name;—and, above all things, don't let me catch you splashing water over their backs,—a rascally trick which some of your craft,—like boobies as they are,—is apt to practice unless they are watched.—None of that;—do you hear?'—

'Haw, haw, haw!'—chuckled Tony:—'Think I don't know how to take care of a hos, mass!—Been too use to creturs—ever sense so high.—Bless the gentman!—one of the best things on arth, when you're feard your hos is too much blowed, is to put a sprinkling of salt in a bucket o'water, mass,—and just stir a leetle indian meal in with it;—it sort of freshes the cretur up like, and is onaccountable good in hot weather, when you aint got no time to feed.—But cold water across the lines!—oh, oh,—I too cute in hos larning for that!—Look at the top of my head—gray as a fox?'—

'Skip then,—or I'll open upon you like a pack of hounds,'—said Robinson, as he turned on his heel to re-enter the house,—'I'll look in after supper.'—

'Never mind me, mass,'—replied Tony, as he led the horses off,—'I have tended captain Butler's hos afore this, and he wan't never onsatisfied with me.'

These cares being disposed of, Horse Shoe returned to the parlour. The tidy display of some plain furniture, and the scrupulous attention to cleanliness in every part of the room, afforded an intelligent commentary upon the exact, orderly and decent character of the widow Dimock. The dame herself was a pattern of useful thrift. Her short figure, as she now bustled, to and fro, through the apartment, was arrayed in that respectable, motherly costume which befitted her years; and which was proper to the period of my story, when the luxury of dress was more expensive than at present, and when a correspondent degree of care was used to preserve it in repair.

Evidences of this laudable economy were seen in the neatness with which a ruffle was darned, or a weak point fortified by a nicely adjusted patch, presenting, in some respect, a token both of the commendable pride of the wearer, and of the straitness of the national means,—since the prevalence of war for five years had not only reduced the wealth of individuals and rendered frugality indispensable, but had, also, literally deprived the country of its necessary supply of commodities; thus putting the opulent and the needy, to a certain extent, upon the same footing. On the present occasion, our good landlady was arrayed in a gown of sober-coloured chintz, gathered into plaits in the skirt, whilst the body fitted closely over a pair of long-waisted stays, having tight sleeves that reached to the elbow. The stature of the dame was increased a full inch by a pair of high heeled, parti-coloured shoes, remarkable for their sharp toes; and a frilled muslin cap, with lappets that reached under the chin, towered sufficiently high to contribute, also, something considerable to the elevation of the tripping little figure of its wearer.

In such guise did Mistress Dimock appear, as she busied herself in preparing needful refreshment for the travellers; and for some time the house exhibited all that stir which belongs to this important care when despatched in a retired country inn.

By degrees, the table began to show the bounties of the kitchen. A savoury dish of fried bacon, the fumes of which had been, for a quarter of an hour, gently stimulating the appetite of the guests, now made its appearance, in company with a pair of broiled pullets; and these were followed by a detachment of brown-crustèd hoe cakes—the peculiar favourite of the province;—an abundance of rich milk, eggs, butter and other rural knicknackeries, such as no hungry man ever surveys with indifference. These were successively deposited upon a homespun table cloth, whose whiteness rivalled the new snow, with an accuracy of adjustment that, by its delay, produced the most visible effects upon the sergent,—who, during the spreading of the board, sat silently by, watching, with an eager and gloating earnestness, the

slow process,—ever and anon uttering a short hem, and turning about restlessly on his chair.

I may pause here, after the fashion of our worthy friend Horse Shoe, to make an observation.—‘There is nothing that works so kindly upon the imagination of a traveller, if he be in any doubt as to his appetite, as the display of such a table. My particularity of detail, on the present occasion, will, therefore, be excused by my reader, when I inform him that Butler had arrived at the inn in that depressed tone of spirits which seemed to defy refreshment; and that, notwithstanding this impediment, he played no insignificant part afterwards at supper;—a circumstance mainly attributable to that gentle but irresistible solicitation, which the actual sight and fragrance of the board addressed to his dormant physical susceptibility. I might, indeed, have pretermitted the supper altogether, were there not a philosophical truth at the bottom of the matter, worthy of the notice of the speculative and curious reader;—namely, that where a man’s heart is a little teased with love,—and his temper fretted by crossings,—and his body jolted by travel;—especially, when he has been wandering through the night air, with owls hooting in his ears; and a thin drapery of melancholy has been flung, like cobwebs, across his spirits,—then, it is my doctrine, that a clean table, a good humoured landlady and an odorous steaming-up of good things, in a snug, cheerful little parlour, are certain to beget in him a complete change of mood, and to give him, instead, a happy train of thoughts and a hearty relish for his food.—Such was precisely Butler’s condition.

He and the sergeant now sat down at the table, and each drew the attention of the other by the unexpected vigour of their assaults upon the dainties before them;—Robinson surprised to find the major so suddenly revived, and Butler no less unprepared to see a man, who had achieved such wonders at dinner, now successively demolish what might be deemed a stout allowance for a well fed lion.

‘It almost seems to go against the credit of my house’—said the hostess,—‘to set gentle folks down at my table without a cup of tea;—but so it is;—we must get used to

be stripped of all the old-fashioned comforts. It is almost treason for an honest woman to have such an article in her house now,—even if it could be fairly come by. Still, I'll engage I am tory enough yet to like the smell of hyson.—They have no mercy upon us old women, major;—they should have a care, or they will drive us into the arms of the enemy.'

'Faith then, ma'am'—interrupted Horse Shoe bluntly, as he threw his eye over his shoulder at the landlady, who had broken into a laugh at her own sally of humour,—'it would be no wonder if you were soon driven back again.'—

'Shame on you, Mr. Sergeant Robinson'—retorted the dame, laughing again—'I didn't expect to hear such a speech from you:—that's a very sorry compliment to a poor country woman.—If the men on our side think so little of us as you do, it would be no wonder if we all desert to King George:—but major Arthur Butler, I am sure, will tell you that we old bodies can sometimes make ourselves very useful—gainsay it who will.'—

'You seem to be rather hard, Galbraith,'—said Butler,—on my good friend Mistress Dimock.—I am sure, Madam, the sergeant has only been unlucky in making himself understood; for I know him to be a man of gallantry to your sex, and to cherish an especial liking for the female friends of our cause,—amongst whom, Mistress Dimock, I can certify he is prepared to set a high value upon yourself.—The sergeant was only endeavouring to provoke your good humour.—Try this honey, Galbraith,—Mistress Dimock is famous for her bee hives;—and perhaps it will give a sweeter edge to your tongue.'

'I spoke, major,'—replied Robinson, awkwardly endeavoring to extricate himself under this joint rebuke, and, at the same time, plunging a spoon into the dish to which Butler had invited his notice—'consarning the difficulty of having ladies—whether old or young makes no difference,—it wan't respecting the age of Mistress Dimock, nor her beauty, by no means, that I said what I did say;—but it was consarning of the difficulty of having the women with them in their marches and their counter-marches. What could such tender creatures have done

at such a place as the sieging of Charlestown?—Certain, this is most elegant honey!”—he added, by way of parenthesis, as he devoured a large slice of bread, well covered with a fragment of honeycomb, as if anxious to gain time to collect his ideas;—for, with all Horse Shoe’s bluntness, he was essentially a diffident man.—“It is my opinion, ma’am, the best thing the women can do, in these here wars, is to knit; and leave the fighting of it out, to us who hav’n’t faces to be spoiled by bad weather and tough times.”

“I don’t want to have art nor part in these quarrels,” replied the widow.—“The saints above are witnesses, I think it unnatural enough to see a peaceable country, and a quiet honest people, vexed and harried, and run down with all this trooping of horses and parading of armies, and clattering of drums, amongst the hills that never heard any thing worse than the lowing of a heifer before. But still, I wish well to liberty; and if it must be fought for, why, I am even content to take my share of the suffering, in my own lonesome way;—and they that bear the heat of the day, and their friends, shall always be served in my house with the best that’s in it,—and at the most reasonable rates.—Even if they come without money, I am not the woman to turn them off with an empty stomach;—I mean them of the right side.”

“Well, that’s as sensible a speech, Mistress Dimock,” said Horse Shoe, quickly seizing the occasion to make amends to the landlady for his former bluntness,—and as much to the purpose, and spoken with as much wisdom and circumscription, as mought come out of the mouth of e’er a lady in the land,—high born or low born,—I don’t care where the other comes from.—And it does a man’s heart good to hear the womankind holding out such presentations. Its encouraging on the face of it.”

During this conversation the supper was finished, and Mrs. Dimock had now seated herself, with her elbows upon the table, so placed as to allow her to prop her chin upon her hands,—in which position she fell into an earnest but quiet, under-toned confabulation with Butler, who partook of it with the more interest, as it related to *the concerns* of the family at the Dove Cote.

'Mr. Lindsay, poor man,'—said the dame, in the course of this conference,—'is wofully beset. It almost looks as if he was haunted by an evil spirit, sure enough,—which folks used to say of him after his wife's death—and which, to tell you the truth, our young lady Mildred has sometimes more than half hinted to me;—he is so run at, and perplexed, and misguided by strangers that can have no good intention in coming to see him. There is Mr. Tyrrel, over at the Dove Cote at this very time,—on his third visit, major—in less now than two months past;—yes,—let me see—he brought the news here of the recapitulation—I think you military call it,—though, heaven knows, I have but a poor head for these blood thirsty words—I mean the taking of Charleston;—three times has he been here, counting from that day. Where he comes from, and who are his kith or kin, I am sure I don't know.'

'Tyrrel—ha!—yes, I have heard of him to-night, for the first time,'—said Butler.—

'He must be a rich man,'—continued the hostess,—'for he travels with two white servants, and always pays his way in gold. One of his men is now in the house;—and, between you and me, major, this man is a very inquisitive sort of person, and would hardly be taken for a serving man;—and he is a cautious fellow too, although there is a good deal of swagger and bullying about him, which might deceive one at first sight.'

'Here, in the house to-night?'—inquired Butler.—

'Speak low, major,—the man is now walking the porch before our windows.'—

'What does Mildred say of this Tyrrel?'—asked Butler.

'Has she been here lately?'—

'The good lady never stirs from home whilst Tyrrel is at the Dove Cote; for fear, I believe, that he will follow her,—for they do whisper about in the neighbourhood—though I don't say it to alarm you, Mr. Arthur,—that this man is of the high quality,—a nobleman, some say—and that he has come here a courting.—Only think of the assurance of the man! But if he was a prince, and every hair of his head strung with diamonds, and Miss Mildred was as free as the day you first saw her—I can say with

safety he would find but cold comfort in that game;—for she despises him, major, both for himself and for his tory principles.—She does hate him with a good will. No, no,—her heart and soul are both where they ought to be,—for all her father, poor man, and this rich gentleman!—Oh, it is a cruel thing that you and our pretty lady cannot live quietly together,—but Mr. Lindsay is past talking to about it.—I declare I think his mind is touched:—I positively believe it would kill him if he knew all that has passed in this house;—but he is, in the main, a good man, and a kind father, and is very much to be pitied.—I see you are sad and sorrowful, Mr. Arthur:—I didn't mean to distress you with my prating. You tell me, you think you may travel as far as Georgia?"—

'Even so far, good dame,—if some accident should not shorten my career. These are doubtful times, and my path is as uncertain as the chances of war.—It may be long before I return.—

'I grieve night and day, and my heart bleeds for Miss Mildred—for she is so good, so constant, so brave, too, for a woman,'—said the widow with unaffected emotion,—'Well a day!—what woes these wars have brought upon us!—You told her your plans, Mr. Arthur?"—

'Our interview was short and painful,'—replied Butler.—'I scarcely know what I said to her. But, one thing I entreat of you:—my letters will be directed to your charge;—you will contrive to have them promptly and secretly delivered:—oblige me still in that, good mother. Henry will often visit you.'

'And a brave and considerate young man he is, major,—I'll be surety for his making of an honourable and a real gentleman.—Do you join the army in Carolina?"

'Perhaps not. My route lies into the mountains—our troops struggle for a footing in the low country.'

'If I may make bold, major Butler, to drop a word of advice into your ear, which, seeing that I'm an older man than you,'—interrupted the sergeant, in an admonitory whisper,—'I think I have got good right to do,—why I would just say that there may be no great inconvenience in talking before friends;—but sometimes silence brings more profit than words. So, I vote that we leave off tell-

ing the course of our march till such time as it is done, and all is safe. There will be briars enough in our way, without taking the trouble to sow them by the road side. The man that stands a little aside from that window—out on the porch—throws his shadow across the sill oftener than is honest, according to my reckoning.—You said, ma'am,—continued Horse Shoe, addressing the widow,—‘that the fellow in the porch is yon Mr. Tyrrel’s man.’—

‘He walks later than usual to-night,’—replied Mrs. Dimock,—‘for though he can’t be called a man of regular hours, yet, unless he can find an idler to keep him company, he is accustomed to be in his bed before this.’—

‘He is after no good—depend upon that,’—said Horse Shoe,—‘I have twice seen the light upon his face behind the shutter:—so, true man or spy, it’s my admonishment not to speak above the purring of a cat.’—

‘You are right, Galbraith,’—said Butler. ‘We have many reasons to distrust him; and it is at least safest to keep our affairs private.’—

‘If I thought he was prying,’—continued Galbraith,—‘which I do measureably insinuate and believe—I would take the freedom to give him the benefit of a drilling on good manners.—Ha, major!—as I have a hand, he is reconnoitring us now, at this identical time!—Didn’t you see him pass up and down before the door, and look in as greedily as if our faces were picture books for him to read?—I will have a word with him; and, wise or simple, I will get his calibre before I am done with him. Never let on, major;—stay where you are.—I promised to look after our horses.’—

The hostess and her guest now continued their communion; in which we leave them, whilst we follow Horse Shoe towards the stable.

CHAPTER VI.

There 're two at fisty-cuffs about it;—

Sir, I may say at dagger's drawing,

But that I cannot say, because they have none.

Mayor of Quinborough.

WHEN Horse Shoe left the apartment, he discovered the person, whose demeanour had excited his suspicion, leaning against a post of the porch in front of the house. The moonlight, as it partially fell upon this man's figure, disclosed a frame of sufficient mould to raise a surmise, that, in whatever form of communication the sergeant might accost him, he was not likely to find a very tractable subject to his hand. Robinson, however, without troubling himself with the contemplation of such a contingency, determined to delay his visit to the stable long enough to allow himself the expression of a word of warning or rebuke, to indicate to the stranger the necessity for restraining his curiosity in regard to the guests of the inn. With this view he halted upon the porch, while he scanned the person before him, and directed an earnest gaze into his face. The stranger, slightly discomfited by this eager scrutiny, turned his back upon his visiter, and, with an air of idle musing, threw his eyes towards the heavens, in which position he remained until summoned by the familiar accost of Horse Shoe.

'Well!—And what do you make of the moon? As sharp an eye as you have in your head, neighbour, I'm thinking it will do you no great sarvice there. You're good at your spying trade;—but you will get nothing out of her:—she keeps her secrets.'—

Startled by this abrupt greeting, which was made in a tone half way between jest and earnest, the stranger quickly confronted his challenger, and bestowed upon him a keen and inquiring inspection;—then breaking into a laugh, he replied with a free and impudent swagger.—

'You are mistaken, master Jack Pudding.—What says the proverb?—Wit's in the wane when the moon's at full.—Now, our mistress has let me into a secret. She tells me that you will not lose your wits, when she comes to her growth.—The reason why?—first, because she

never troubles herself with so small a stock as yours,—and second, because your thick skull is moon proof:—so, you're safe, friend.'—

'A word in your ear,'—said Horse Shoe.—'You are not safe, friend, if you are crotch again peeping through the chinks of the window, or sneaking upon the dark side of the doorway, to pick up a crumb of talk from people that are not axing your company.—Keep that in your memory.'—

'It's a base, blackguard lie, Mr. Bumpkin, if you mean to insinuate that I did either.'—

'Oh, quiet, and easy,—good man! No flusterifications here!—I am counted a civil, peaceable man;—and windy words would only be lost breath upon me—so, if you come of decent and honest people, you will take my advice, and chaw your cud in silence,—and go to bed at a reasonable hour, without minding what folks have to say who come to the widow Dimock's. It only run in my head to give you a polite sort of a warning.—So, good night—I have got business at the stable.'—

Before the other could reply Robinson strode away to look after the accommodations of the horses.

'The devil damn the impertinent ox driver!'—muttered the man to himself, after the sergeant had left him,—'I have half a mind to take his fat carcase in hand, just that it may have the benefit of a good, wholesome manipulation. A queer fellow, too,—a joker, by the piper!—a civil, peaceable man—the hyperbolical rogue!—Well, I'll see him out—and, laugh or fight, he shan't want a man to stand up to him!'—

Having, by this train of reflection, brought himself into a mood, which might be said to hover upon the isthmus between anger and mirth, ready to fall to either side as the provocation might serve, the stranger sauntered slowly towards the stable, with a hundred odd fancies, as to the character of the man he sought, running through his mind. Upon his arrival there he found that Horse Shoe was occupied in the interior of the building, and, being still in a state of uncertainty as to the manner in which it was proper he should greet our redoubtable friend, he took a seat on a small bench at the door, resolved to wait

for that worthy's reappearance. This delay had a soothing effect upon his temper; for as he debated the subject over in his mind, certain considerations of policy seemed to indicate to him the necessity of making himself better acquainted with the business and quality of the individual whom he came to meet.

After a few moments, Horse Shoe was seen with old Tony, at the stable door, where, notwithstanding the unexpected presence of the man to whom he had so lately offered his unwelcome advice, and upon whom he now conferred not the slightest notice, he continued uninterruptedly, and with deliberate composure, to give his orders upon what, at that moment, doubtless, he deemed matter of much graver importance than any concern he might have in the visit of his new acquaintance.

'Do what I tell you, Tony.—Get a piece of linen,—rub it well over with tallow,—and bring it here along with a cup of vinegar. The beast's back is cut with the saddle, and you must wash the sore first with the vinegar, and then lay on the patch.—Go, old fellow—and Mrs. Dimock, may be, can give you a strip of woollen cloth to serve as a pad.'—

With these instructions the negro retired towards the house.

'I see you understand your business,'—said the stranger.—'You look to your horse's back at the end of a day's journey—and you know how to manage a sore spot. Vinegar is the thing!—You have had a long ride?'

'How do you know that?'—inquired Horse Shoe.

'Know it!—Any man might guess as much, by the way you shovelled down your supper. I happened by chance to pass your window, and seeing you at it,—faith! for the soul of me I couldn't help taking a few turns more, just to watch the end of it.—Ha, ha, ha!—Give me the fellow that does honour to his stomach!—And your dolt head must be taking offence at my looking at you!—Why, man, your appetite was a most beautiful rarity—I wouldn't have lost the sport of it for the pleasure of the best supper I ever ate myself.'—

'Indeed!'—said Robinson, drily.—

'Pease upon the trencher,'—exclaimed the other, with the air of a pot companion,—'that's the true music for good fellows of your kidney!—But it isn't every where that you will find such bountiful quarters as you get here at the Blue Ball:—in that cursed southern country, a man like you would breed a famine; if you even do not find one ready made to your hand when you get there.'—

'Where mought you be from?'—asked the sergeant with great gravity, without responding to the merriment of his visiter, and purposely refraining from the answer which he saw it was the other's drift to obtain relative to the course of his travel.—

'It was natural enough that you should have mistaken my object,'—continued the stranger, heedless of Horse Shoe's abrupt question,—'and have suspected me for wanting to hear some of your rigmarole;—but there you did me wrong—I forgive you for that—and, to tell you the truth, I hate your'—

'That's not to the purpose,'—said Horse Shoe,—'I axed you a civil question—and, may be, that's more than you have a right to.—You can answer it or let it alone.—I want to know where mought you be from?'—

'Since you are bent upon it then,'—replied the other, suddenly changing his tone, and speaking with a saucy emphasis,—'I'll answer your question, when you tell me what *mought* be your right to know.'

'It's the custom of our country,'—rejoined Horse Shoe,—'I don't know what it may be in yourn—to larn a little about the business of every man we meet;—but we do it by fair, out-and-out question and answer—all above board;—and we hold in despise all sorts of contwistifications—either by laying of tongue-traps, or listening under eaves of houses.'—

'Well, and most wise and shrewd master, what do you call my country? Ha, ha, ha,—I would be sworn you think you have found some mare's nest! If it were not that your clown pate is somewhat addled by over feeding, I would hold your speech to be impertinent.—My country, I'd have your sagacity to understand'—

'Tut man—it arn't worth the trouble of talking about it!—I never saw one of your people that I didn't know

him by the first word that came out of his lips. You are an Englishman,—and a red coat into the bargain,—as we call them in these parts. You have been a sodger.—Now, never bounce at that, man!—There's no great harm in belonging to that craft. They listed you,—as likely as not, when you was flusticated with liquor—and you took your pay:—there was a bargain, and it was your business to stand to it. But, I have got a piece of wisdom to whisper to you:—insomuch as you are not in the most agreeablest part of the world to men of your colours, it would be best to be a little more shy against giving offence. You said some saucy things to me just now—but I don't grudge your talking,—because, you see, I am an onaccountable hard sort of person to be instigated by speeching.'

'Verily, you are a most comical piece of dullness,'—said the other, in a spirit of raillery.—'In what school did you learn your philosophy, friend?—You have been brought up to the wholesome tail of the plough, I should say:—an ancient and reputable occupation.'

'When I obsarved, just now,'—replied Robinson, somewhat sternly,—'that I couldn't be instigated, I meant to be comprehended as laying down a kind of general doctrine that I was a man not given to quarrels;—but still, if I suspicioned a bamboozlement, which I am not far from at this present speaking, if it but come up to the conflagrating of only the tenth part of the wink of an eye, in a project to play me off,—fore God, I confess myself to be as weak in the flesh as e'er a rumbunctious fellow you mought meet on the road.'

'Friend,'—said the other,—'I do not understand thy lingo. It has a most clodpolish smack.—It is neither grammar, english, nor sense.'

'Then, you are a damned, onmannerly rascal,'—said Horse Shoe,—'and that's grammar, english and sense,—all three.'

'Ha, you are at that!—Now, my lubberly booby, I understand you,'—returned the other, springing to his feet. 'Do you know to whom you are speaking?'

'Better than you think for,'—replied the sergeant, placing himself in an erect position to receive what he

had a right to expect,—the threatened assault of his adversary,—‘I know you, and guess your arrand here.’

‘You do?’—returned the other sharply.—‘You have been juggling with me, sir.—You are not the gudgeon I took you for.—It has suited your purpose to play the clown, eh?—Well, sir, and pray what do you guess?’—

‘Nothing good of you, considering how things go here. Suppose I was to say you was, at this self-same identical time, a sodger of the king’s?—I have you there!’—

The stranger turned on his heel and retreated a few paces, evidently perplexed at the new view in which the sergeant suddenly rose to his apprehension. His curiosity and his interest were both excited to gain a more distinct insight into a man whom he had mistaken for a mere simpleton, but whose hints shewed him to be shrewdly conversant with the personal concerns of one, whom, apparently, he had seen to-night for the first time in his life. With this anxiety upon his mind, he again approached the sergeant, as he replied to the last question.

‘Well, and if I were?—It is a character of which I should have no reason to be ashamed.’—

‘That’s well said!’—exclaimed Horse Shoe.—‘Up and speak out, and never be above owning the truth;—that’s the best sign that can be of a man. Although it mought be somewhat dangerous, just hereabouts, to confess yourself a sodger of King George—let me tell you, that, being against you, I am not the person to mislest you on that head, by spreading the news abroad, or setting a few dozen of whigs upon your scent, which is a thing easily done. If your business here is peaceable and lawful, and you don’t let your tongue brawl against quiet and orderly people,—you are free to come and go for me.’

‘Thank you, sir:—but, look you;—it isn’t my way to answer questions about my own business, and I scorn to ask any man’s leave to come and go where and when my occasions call me.’

‘If it isn’t your way to answer questions about your own business,’—replied Horse Shoe,—‘it oughtn’t to be your way to ax them about other people’s.—But that don’t disturb me:—it is the rule of the war to question all comers and goers that we happen to fall in with—

specially now, when there's a set of your devils scampering and raging about in Carolina, hardly a summer day's ride off this province—burning houses and killing cattle, and turning every thing topsy turvy,—with a pack of rascally tories to back them. In such times all sorts of tricks are played—such as putting on coats that don't belong to a man, and deceiving honest people by lies, and what not.'—

'You are a stranger to me,'—said the other;—'but let me tell you, without circumlocution or periphrase, I am a free born subject of the king, and I see no reason why, because some of his people have turned rebels, a true man, who travels his highway, should be obliged to give an account of himself to every inquisitive fellow who chooses to challenge it. Suppose I tell you that you meddle with matters that don't concern you?'

'Then you mought chance to get your head in your hand—that's all. And, hark you,—if it wan't that I am rather good natured, I mought happen to handle you a little rough for that nicknaming of the friends of liberty, by calling them rebels. It doesn't suit such six-pence-a-day fellows as you, who march right or left at the bidding of your master, to rob a church or root up an honest man's peaceful hearth—without so much as daring to have a thought about the righteousness of the matter—it doesn't suit such to be befouling them that fight for church and fireside both, with your scurvy, balderdash names.'

'Well, egad!—you are a fine bold fellow that speaks his thoughts—that's not to be denied!'—said the stranger, again suddenly changing his mood, and resorting to his free and easy address.—'You suit these times devilish well. I can't find it in my heart to quarrel with you. We have both been somewhat rough in speech—and so, the account is square. But now tell me,—after all, are you sure you have guessed me right? How do you know I am not one of these very rebels myself?'

'For two good and point blank reasons. First, you dar'n't deny that you have pocketed the king's money and worn his coat:—that's one.—And, second, you are now here under the orders of one of his officers.'

'No, no,—good friend,'—said the man, with a voice of less boldness than heretofore,—'you are mistaken for once in your life. So far what you say, I don't deny—I am in the service of a gentleman who, for some private affairs of his own, has come on a visit to this part of the province—and I admit I have been in the old country.'—

'I am not mistaken, good friend,'—drawled out Robinson, affectedly.—'You come from the south. I can tell men's fortunes without looking into the palms of their hands.'—

'You are wrong again,'—said the other tartly, as he grew angry at being thus badgered by his opponent,—'I come from the north.'—

'That's true and it's false both,'—returned Robinson.—'From the north, I grant you,—to the south, with Sir Henry—and from the south, up here.—You will find I can conjure a little, friend.'

'The devil take your conjuring!'—exclaimed the other, as he bit his lip and strode restlessly backward and forward; which perplexity being observed by the sergeant, he did not fail to aggravate it by breaking into a hoarse laugh, as he said.

'It wan't worth your while to try to deceive me. I knowed you by manifold and simultaneous signs. Him that sets about scouting after other people's secrets, ought to be wary enough to larn to keep his own. But don't take it so to heart, neighbour,—there's no occasion for oneasiness—I have no mind to harm you.'

'Master bully,'—said the stranger, planting himself immediately in front of the sergeant,—'in England, where I was bred, we play at cudgels, and sometimes give broken heads; and some of us are gifted with heavy fists, wherewith we occasionally contrive to box a rude fellow who prys too much into our affairs.'—

'In our country,'—replied Horse Shoe,—'we generally like to get a share of whatever news is stirring, and, though we don't practise much with cudgels,—yet, to sarve a turn, we do, now and then, break a head or so; and, consarning that fist work you happened to touch upon, we have no condesentious scruples against a fair rap or two over the knowledge box, and the tripping-up

of a fractious chap's heels, in the way of a sort of a rough-and-tumble, which, may be, you understand.—You have been long enough here, mayhap, to find that out.'

'Then, it is likely, it would please you to have a chance at such a game? I count myself a pretty tolerable hand at the play,'—said the stranger, with a composure correspondent to that exhibited by Horse Shoe.—

'Ho, ho!—I don't want to hurt you man,'—replied the sergeant.—'You will get yourself into trouble. You are hot-headedder than is good for your health.'

'As the game was mentioned, I thought you might have a fancy to play it.'—

'To be sure I would,'—said Horse Shoe,—'rather than disappoint you in any reasonable longing. For the sake of quiet—being a peaceable man,—I will take the trouble to oblige you.—Where, do you think, would be the likeliest spot to have it?'—

'We may readily find a piece of ground at hand,'—replied the other.—'It is a good moonlight play, and we may not be interrupted if we get a little distance off before the negro comes back. Toe to toe, and face to face, suits me best with both friend and foe.'

'A mule to drive and a fool to hold back, are two of the contrariest things I know,'—said Robinson,—'and so, seeing that you are in earnest about it, let us go at it without more ado upon the first good bit of grass we can pop upon along the river.'

In this temper the two antagonists left the vicinity of the stable and walked some hundred paces down along the bank of the stream. The man with whom Horse Shoe was about to hold this strange encounter, and who now walked quietly by his side, had the erect and soldierly port of a grenadier. He was square-shouldered, compact and muscular, and the firmness of his gait, his long and easy stride, and the free swing of his arm as he moved onward in the moonlight, showed Robinson that he was to engage with an adversary of no common capacity. There was, perhaps, on the other side, some abatement in this man's self-confidence, when the same light disclosed to his deliberate inspection the brawny propor-

tions of the sergeant, which, in the engrossment of the topics bandied about in the late dialogue, he had not so accurately regarded.

When they had walked the distance I have mentioned, they had little difficulty to select a space of level ground with a sufficient mould for the purpose of the proposed trial of strength.

'Here's as pretty a spot as we mought find on the river,'—said Robinson,—'and so get ready, friend, as quick as you can.—Before we begin, I have a word to say. This here bout is not a thing of my seeking—because, you must know, I don't want to do you no harm;—and I take it to be close akin to downright tom-foolery— if it arn't the thing itself,—for grown-up men, that the world's got a right to expect more sense of, to set about thumping and hammering each other, upon account of a brag of who's best man, or such like insignificant cantrip,—when the whole univarse is full of occasions for serious scuffles, and stands in need of able bodied fellows, to argufy the pints of right and wrong, that can't be settled by preachers, or books, or lawyers, or spokesmen,—or any other of Satan's rank and file,—whose business it is to cut out pretences of quarrel.—When a man comes to be a little topsy-turvied by the world, and can count as many rings in his wood as you and me, it's a sort of a foolish thing to talk to him about showing his courage.—It is an observation I have made, that bravery is no more to be showed in a brawl, when one man has cornered another, than religion is to be reckoned from the long faces of a sick man.—So a man must be judged correspondent, and according to the circumstances of his life, and not in consideration of his humour at some particular setting on. For all these significations, I look upon this here coming out to fight no better than a bit of arrant nonsense. But, as you will have it,—it's no consarn of mine to stop you.'

'You are welcome to do your worst,'—replied the other,—'and the less preaching you make with it, the more saving of time.'

'My worst,'—interrupted Horse Shoe,—'is almost more than I have the conscience to do to any man who isn't a

downright flagitious enemy;—and, once more, I would advise you to think before you draw me into a fray:—you are frustrated, and sot upon a quarrel,—and, mayhap, you conjecture that by drawing me out from behind my retrenchments,—by which is signified my good nature,—and forcing me to deploy into line in open field, you'll get the advantage of an old sodger over me:—but there, Mr. Dragoon, you are mistaken.—In close garrison or open field, in seige or sally, crossing a defile or reconnoitring on a broad road, I am not apt to lose my temper, or strike without seeing where my blow is to hit.—Now, that is all I have to say:—so, come on.'—

'You are not what you seem,'—said the antagonist, in a state of wonder at the strain of the sergeant's composed and deliberate speech, and at the familiarity which this effusion manifested with the details of military life.—'In the devil's name,—who are you?—But, don't fancy I pause to begin our fight, for any other reason than that I may know who I contend with.—On the honour of a soldier, I promise you, I will hold you to your game,—man, or imp of hell—I care not.—Again, who in the devil, are you?'—

'You have hit it,'—replied Horse Shoe.—'My name is Brimstone, I am first cousin to Belzebub.'—

'You have served?'

'I have.'

'And belong to the army yet?'

'True again;—and I am as tough a sodger, and, may be, I mought say, as old a sodger as yourself.'—

'Your hand, fellow soldier. I mistook you from the beginning. You continentals—that's the new fangled word—are stout fellows, and have a good knack at the trick of war, though you wear rough coats, and are savagely unrudimented in polite learning. No matter what colours a man fights under,—long usage makes a good comrade of him; and, by my faith! I am not amongst the last to do him honour, even though we stand in opposite ranks.—As you say, most sapient Brimstone, we are not much better than a pair of fools for this conspiracy to knock about each others' pates, here at midnight:—but you have my pledge to it—and so, we will go at it—if it

be only to win a relish for our beds—I will teach you to night some skill in the art of mensuration. You shall measure two full ells upon this green sod.’—

‘There’s my hand,’—said Horse Shoe,—‘now, if I am flung, I promise you I won’t be angry.—If I sarve you in the same fashion, you must larn to bear it.’—

‘With all my heart.—So here I stand upon my guard.—Begin.’—

‘Let me feel your weight,’—said Robinson laughing, as he put one hand upon his adversary’s shoulder, and the other against his side.—‘I’ll tell you beforehand how this matter will turn out.—Hark you, master, I feel something hard here about your ribs—you have pistols under your coat, friend.—For the sake of fair play and keeping rid of foul blood, you had best lay them aside before we strike.—Anger comes up onawares.’—

‘I never part with my weapons,’—replied the other, stepping back and releasing himself from Robinson’s grasp.—‘We are strangers, I must know the company I am in before I dismiss such old cronies as these. They have got me out of a scrape before this.’

‘We took hands just now,’—said Robinson angrily.—‘When I give my hand it is tantamount to a book oath that I mean fair, round dealing with the man who takes it.—I told you, besides, I was a sodger—that ought to have contented you, and you mought sarch my breast inside and out—you’d’a seen in it nothing but honest meanings.—There’s something of a suspectable rascality, after that, in talking about pistols hid under the flaps of the coat.—It’s altogether onmanful—and, what’s more, onsodgerly. You are a deceit, and an astonishment and a hissing, all three, James Curry,—and no better to my comprehension than a coward.—I know you of old—though, mayhap, you disremember me. I have hearn said by more than one, that you was a double-faced, savage-hearted, disregardless beast—that snashed his teeth where he darstn’t bite, and bullied them that hadn’t the heart to fight—I have hearn that of you, and, as I live, I believe it! Now, look out for your bull head, for—by the soul of my fater—I will cuff you in spite of your pistols!’—

With these words Horse Shoe gave his adversary some half dozen over-powering blows, in such quick succession as utterly defied and broke down the other's guard;—and then seizing him by the breast he threw the tall and stalwart form of Curry at full length upon the ground.

'There's your two ells for you!—there's the art of menstirration—you disgrace to the tail of a drum—you heathen Turk!'—exclaimed Horse Shoe with accumulating wrath, as the prostrate man struggled to extricate himself from the lion grasp that held him.—In this strife Curry several times made an effort to get his hand upon his pistol, in which he was constantly foiled by the superior vigour of the sergeant.

'No, no,'—continued the latter as he became aware of this attempt,—'James Curry, you shall never lay hold upon your fire-arms whilst I have the handling of you.—Give them up, you riotous, twisting prevaricationer—give them up, you disgracer of powder and lead—and learn this from a rebel, that I don't blow out your brains, only because I wouldn't accommodate the devil by flinging such a lump of petrification into his clutches.—There, man,'—he added, as he threw the pistols far from him into the river, his exasperation, at the same time, moderating to a lower temperature,—'get upon your feet:—and now you may go hunt for your cronies in yonder running stream. You may count it a marcy that I haven't tossed you after them to wash the cowardly blood off your face.—Now, that you are upon your legs, I tell you here in the moonlight, man to man, with nobody by to hold back your hand, that you are a lying, deceitful, skulker, that loves the dark side of a wall better than the light, that steals the secrets of honest folks, and hasn't the heart to stand up fairly to the man that tells you of it.—Swallow that, James Curry, and see how it will lay upon your stomach!'

'By all the powers of hell!'—exclaimed Curry—'I will seek a time to right myself with your heart's blood,'—

'Pshaw, pshaw, man!'—replied Horse Shoe—'don't talk about heart's blood. The next time we come into a field together ax for Galbraith Robinson—commonly called Horse Shoe Robinson.—Find me out—that's all.

We may take a frolic together then,—and I give you my allowance to wear your pistols in your belt.’—

‘We may find a field yet, Horse Shoe Robinson,’—returned Curry,—‘and by G— I’ll not fail of my appointment. Our game will be played with broad swords.’—

‘If it should so turn out, James, that you and me are to work through a campaign in the same quarter of the world—as we have done afore, James, I expect—I’ll take the chance of some holyday to make my respects to you. I wont trouble you to ride far to find me;—and then it may be broad sword, or pistol, rifle or bagnet—I’m not over-scrumptious which.—Only promise I shall see you when I send for you.’

‘It’s a bargain, Galbraith Robinson! Strong as you think yourself in your cursed rough-and-tumble horse-play. I am soldier enough for you, any day,—I only ask that the time may come quickly.’—

‘You have no objection to give us a hand to clinch that bargain, James?’—asked Horse Shoe—‘There’s my paw—take it man—I scorn to bear malice after the hot blood cools.’—

‘I take it with more pleasure now’—said Curry, hastily seizing the hand—‘than I gave mine to you before to-night,—because it is a pledge that suits my humour. A good seat in a saddle—four strong legs below me, and a sharp blade—I hold myself a match for the best man that ever picked a flint in your lines.’—

‘Now, friend Curry,’—exclaimed the sergeant,—‘good night!—Go look for your pop-guns in the river—and if you find them, hold them as a keepsake to remember Horse Shoe Robinson.—Good night.’

Robinson now left his adversary and returned to the inn, ruminating, as he walked, over the strange incident in which he had just been engaged. For awhile his thoughts wore a grave complexion; but, as his careless good humour gradually broke forth through the thin mist that enveloped it, he was found, before he reached the porch laughing, with a quiet chuckle, at the conceit which rose upon his mind, as he said half-audibly—‘Odd sport for a summer night!—Howsever, every one to his liking, as the old woman said,—but, to my thinking, he mought have

done better if he had gone to sleep at a proper hour like a moralized and sober christian.'—

When he entered the parlour he found Butler and the landlady waiting for him.

'It is late, sergeant,'—said the major.—'You have forgotten the hour, and I began to fear you had more to say to your friend there, than suited the time of night.'—

'All is right by your smiling,'—added the landlady—'and that's more than I expected at the time you walked out of the room. I couldn't go to my bed till I was sure you and my lodger had no disagreeable words;—for, to tell you truth, I am greatly afraid of his hot and hasty temper.'

'There is nothing hot or hasty about him, ma'am,'—replied Robinson,—'he is about as peaceable a man as you might expect to meet in such times as these.—I only told him a little scrap of news,—and you would have thought the curmudgeon would have hugged me for it, ha, ha, ha!'

'We are to sleep in the same room, sergeant,'—said Butler,—'and our good hostess will show us the way to it.'

The dame upon this hint took a candle, and conducted her guests to a chamber in the upper story, where, after wishing them 'a good night,' she courtesied respectfully and left them to their repose.

'Tell me, sergeant, what you made out of that fellow,' said Butler as he undressed himself,—'I see that you have had some passage with him; and, from your tarrying so long, I began to be a little apprehensive of rough work between you.—What passed, and what have you learned?'

'Enough, major, to make us more circumscriptions against scouts, and spies and stratagems. When I was a prisoner at Charlestown there was an amazing well-built fellow, a dragoon, that had been out with Tarleton, but when I saw him he was a sort of rithmatical account-keeper, and letter-scribbler for that young fighting-cock, the Earl of Caithness,—him that was aidegong to Sir Henry Clinton.—Well, this fellow had a tolerable bad name, as being a chap that the devil had spiled in spite of all the good that had been pumped into him at

school,—for, as I have hearn, he was come of gentle people, had a first rate edication—and, I reckon, now, major, he talks as well as a book,—whereupon I have an observation.’—

‘Keep that until to-morrow, sergeant,’—interrupted Butler,—‘and go on with what you had to tell me.’—

‘You must be a little sleepy, major:—howsever, this fellow, they say, was cotch cheating with cards one day, when he was playing a game of five shilling loo with the King or the Queen, or some of the dukes or colonels in the guards—for he wa’n’t above any thing rascally. So, it was buzzed about, as you may suppose when a man goes to cheating one of them big fish—and the King gave him his choice to enlist, or go to the Hulks,—and he, being no fool, listed, as a matter of course. In that way he got over here; and, as I tell you, was a sort of sarvant to that young Earl. He sometimes came about our quarters to list prisoners and make Tories of ’em,—for his own people kept him to do all that sort of dirty work, upon account of the glibness of his tongue. He was a remarkable saucy fellow, and got nothing but ill-will from the prisoners,—though, I make no doubt, the man is a tolerable sodger on sarvice. Now, after telling you all this, major, you must know that the identical, same, particular man that we saw looking through the porch window at us to-night’—

‘Is the man you have been describing?—Is it possible? Are you sure of it?’—

‘I knowed him the minute I clapped eyes on him:—his name is James Curry:—but, as I didn’t stay long at Charlestown, and hadn’t any thing to do with him in particular, it seems he didn’t remember me.’

‘You conversed with him?’

‘Most sartainly I did.—I wanted to gather a little consarning of his visit up here;—but the fellow’s been so battered about in the wars, that he knows how to hold his tongue. I had some mischief in me, and did want to make him just angry enough to set his speech loose;—and, besides, I felt a little against him upon account of his misdoings with our people in Carolina,—and so, I said some rough things to him,—and, as my discourse

ar'n't none of the squarest in pint of grammar and topographical circumlocution,—as lieutenant Hopkins used to say—why he set me down for a piece of an idiot, and began to hoax and bamboozle me.—I put that matter strait for him very soon, by just letting him say so much and no more. And then, as I was a peaceable man, major, he seemed to see that I didn't want to have no quarrel with him, which made him push it at me rather too hard,—and all my civility ended in my giving him what he wanted at first—a toletable, regular thrashing.'—

The sergeant continued to relate to Butler the details of this adventure, which he did with more prolixity than the weariness of his listener was able to endure; for the major, having in the progress of the narrative got into bed, and having, in the increasing oscitancy of his faculties, exhausted every expression of assent by which one who listens to a tale is accustomed to notify his attention—he at length dropped into a profound sleep, leaving the sergeant to conclude at his leisure.

When Robinson perceived this, he had nothing left but to betake himself, with all expedition, to his own rest; whereupon he threw off his coat and, taking the coverings of the bed appropriated to his use, spread them upon the floor, as he pronounced an anathema against sleeping on feathers, (for it must be observed, that our good hostess, at that early day, was liable to the same censure of an unnatural attachment to feather beds in summer, which may, at the present time, be made against almost every country inn in the United States,) and then extinguishing the candle, he stretched himself upon the planks, as he remarked to his unconscious companion, 'that he was brought up on a hard floor;'—and after one or two rolls, he fell into that deep oblivion of cares, by which nature re-summons and supplies the strength which toil, watching and anxiety wear down.

The speed of Horse Shoe's journey through this pleasant valley of sleep, might be measured somewhat in the same manner that the route of a mail stage may sometimes be traced through a mountain defile, by the notes of the coachman's horn;—it was defined by the succession of varying intonations through which he ascended the

gamut, beginning with a low but audible breathing, and rising through the several stages of an incipient snore,—a short quick bark,—and up to a snort that constituted the greatest altitude of the ascent. Occasionally a half articulated interjection escaped him, and words that showed in what current his dreams were sailing:—‘No pistols!—Look in the water, James!—Ha, ha!’ These utterings were accompanied with ‘contortions of body that more than once awakened the sleeper; but, at last, the huge bulk of Horse Shoe grew motionless in a deep and strong sleep.

The next morning, at early dawn, our travellers resumed their journey, which I will leave them to prosecute, whilst I conduct my reader to the affairs and interests that dwell about the Dove Cote.

CHAPTER VII.

SOME ACCOUNT OF PHILIP LINDSAY.—SENSIBILITY AND RETIREMENT
APT TO ENGENDER A FALSE AND PERNICIOUS PHILOSOPHY.

THE thread which I have now to take up and weave into this history, requires that my narrative should go back some years. It briefly concerns the earlier fortunes of Philip Lindsay.

His father emigrated from England and was established in Virginia, somewhere about the year 1735, as a secretary to the governor of the province. He was a gentleman of good name and fortune. Philip was born within a year after this emigration. As America was then comparatively a wilderness, and afforded but few facilities to the education of youth, the son of the secretary was sent at an early age to England, where he continually remained, (with the exception, perhaps, of one or two visits to his parents,) under the guardianship of a near relative, until he had attained to man’s estate and completed his studies in the Temple,—an almost indispensable requirement, of that day, for young gentlemen of condition.

Philip’s studies in the temple had been productive of one result, which my Lord Coke, if I remember, consi-

ders idiosyncratic in the tribe of the younger votaries of Themis:—he had fallen in love with an heiress. The study of the law and love, I have ever found, have been strangely combined. Perhaps it is that so untoward, unimaginative and emotionless a pursuit, as the former, has some natural influence upon the passions, resembling starvation upon the body, and whets, instead of dulling, the edge of appetite. Certain it is, your young lawyer has a marvellous quick eye for beauty.

Philip languished a year at the seat of the provincial government; corroborated his attachment, in the meantime, by a zealous epistolary correspondence with the lady Gertrude Marshall,—for so my authority allows me to call her,—and, in the end, obtained his father's permission to re-visit the lady of his heart, and to make her his wife. This being done, the youth was content to come back to Virginia, where he became a useful member of the government, and held successively several offices of dignity and trust. In due course of time, he fell heir to his father's wealth, which, added to the estate of his wife, made him one of the most opulent, as well as one of the most considerable gentlemen, of the Old Dominion.

Mr. Lindsay's first child was Mildred; and it was four years after her birth, that his chance of perpetuating his race was doubled by the addition of a son;—the same young Henry Lindsay, with whom I have already brought my reader acquainted. These two were all his progeny; and it may be supposed, that the attachment of the parents to their children was greatly heightened by the circumstance, that there were but two. The interval, moreover, that occurred between the births of Mildred and of Henry, had been sufficiently long to conjure up in the mind of the mother, that unquiet anxiety and secret eagerness for increase of offspring, that forms so powerful an instinct in the sex, and led her, until she was favoured with the glad signs that her frequent prayer had been granted, into the exhibition of an exorbitant fondness for her daughter. This had its effect upon the early character of Mildred: it bred up a passionate and assiduous devotion to her parents, accompanied with habits of most implicit confidence. As Henry grew apace he, shared the

egard, and was nurtured in the warmth of every sentiment that a family so organized could bestow upon the favorite.

Lindsay's temper was philosophical: he had seen much of the world, but had shared little in its passions and pursuits. Affluence had raised him above the common life; and, as a man who valued tranquillity of mind rather avoided those positions which were to be held for at the expense of comfort, or which exposed him to the necessity of perceiving, or fighting, the baseness which every strong man, who buffed his way through this world, is compelled to look on and conquer. A delicate taste, a nice judgment, a contemplative complexion of character directed him to the quiet of his study. He was an ardent lover of books; and, not from ostentation, nor any purpose of profit from mere fondness of inquiry, he pored over the treasures of science. The ply of his mind was to the secrets of metaphysical philosophy: he relished the subtle subtleties of learning, and took a devout pleasure in penetrating the depths into which the speculations of an abstract age had plunged the eccentric, intellectual giants of antiquity, in their search after the great problem of man's nature and origin. He dwelt in the reveries of Plato, and pursued them in all the aberrations of the Coryphæans. He led his imagination through the land of visions of oracles, and followed his quarry in the wanderings of Pythagoras. The Gnostic mysteries had their attractions upon him, and even the wild phantasmagoria of judicial astrology: the apparatus of conjurations; the periapts, and invocations of Cornelius Agrippa and the wizards, of Raymond Lully and Martin Delrio; the traditions of the Brahminical priests; the ancient and the modern witchcraft;—all were filled with interest for a mind that delighted to contemplate the phenomena of that wonder-working, inexplicable, power-frivolous magician,—man.

His course of study, although pursued with a due attention to the unsubstantial nature of the air-built structure which it presented to his contemplation, neverthe-

less, had its influence upon his imagination. There are few men in whom the mastery of reason is so complete as entirely to stifle that germ of superstition, which is one of the ingredients in the composition of the human mind. The balance between passion and pure intellect is seldom so far destroyed, that the former will not sometimes turn the beam; and I doubt much if that man has ever lived, who could not be wrought upon by agents, prepared for the purpose, to experience some degree of terror (perhaps inquietude would be a better phrase) at the up-rising of the phantoms of imagination.

In the subject of my present story, these cabalistic studies had impressed his understanding with the character of something resembling veneration for the imaginings of enthusiasts; and had, to a certain degree, warmed up his faith to an unwilling assent, or, at least, to an unsatisfied doubt as to their possible truth. It might be compared to the poetical, half-confessed superstition of Milton and Shakspeare, and to that which gave such a hue of rich romance to the two master spirits of our own times,—alas, now living only in their own immortal fancies!—Coleridge and Scott.

Mr. Lindsay's relations to the government, his education, pursuits and temper, as might be expected, had deeply imbued him with the politics of the tory party, and taught him to regard with distrust, and even with abhorrence, the revolutionary principles which were getting in vogue. In this sentiment he visited with a dislike that did not correspond with the more usual development of his character, all those who were, in any degree, suspected of aiding or abetting the prevailing political heresy of the times.

About two years after the birth of Mildred, he had purchased a tract of land in the then new and frontier country, lying upon the Rockfish river. Many families of note in the low country had possessed themselves of estates at the foot of the Blue Ridge, in this neighbourhood, and were already making establishments there. Mr. Lindsay, attracted by the romantic character of the scenery, the freshness of the soil and the healthfulness of the climate, following the example of others, had laid off

the grounds of his new estate with great taste, and had soon built, upon a beautiful site, a neat and comfortable rustic dwelling, with such accommodation as might render it a convenient and pleasant retreat during the hot months of the summer.

The occupation which this new establishment afforded his family; the scope which its improvement gave to their taste; and the charms that intrinsically belonged to it, by degrees, communicated to his household an absorbing interest in its embellishment.—His wife cherished this enterprise with a peculiar ardour. The plans of improvement were her's; the garden, the lawns, the groves, the walks,—all the little appendages which an assiduous taste might invent, or a comfort-seeking fancy might imagine necessary, were taken under her charge; and one beauty quickly following upon another, from day to day, evinced the dominion which a refined art may exercise with advantage over nature. It was a quiet, calm and happy spot, where many conveniences were congregated together, and where, for a portion of every succeeding year, this little family nestled, as it were, in the enjoyment of voluptuous ease. From this idea, and, more especially, as it was allied with some of the tenderest associations connected with the infancy of Mildred, it was called by the fanciful and kindly name of 'The Dove Cote.'

The education of Mildred and Henry became a delightful household care. Tutors were supplied, and the parents gave themselves up to the task of supervision with a fond industry. They now removed earlier to the Dove Cote with every returning spring, and remained there later in the autumn. The neighbourhood furnished an intelligent and hospitable society; and the great western wilderness smiled with the contentment of a refined and polished civilization, which no after day in the history of this empire has yet surpassed—perhaps, not equalled. It is not to be wondered at, that a mind so framed as Lindsay's, and a family so devoted, should find an exquisite enjoyment in such a spot.

Whilst this epoch of happiness was in progression, the political heaven began to be darkened with clouds. The

troubles came on with harsh portents: war rumbled in the distance, and, at length, broke out in thunder. Mildred had, in the meantime, grown up to the verge of womanhood,—a fair, ruddy, light-haired beauty, of exceeding graceful proportions, and full of the most interesting impulses. Henry trod closely upon her heels, and was now shooting through the rapid stages of boyhood. Both had entwined themselves around their parent's affections, like fibres that conveyed to them their chief nourishment; and the children were linked to each other even, if that were possible, by a stronger bond.

The war threw Lindsay into a perilous predicament. His estates were large, and his principles exposed him to the sequestration which was rigidly enforced against the royalist party. To avoid this blow or, at least, to mitigate its severity, he conveyed the estate of the Dove Cote to Mildred, assigning, as his reason for doing so, that, as it was purchased with moneys belonging to his wife, he consulted and executed her wish in transferring the absolute ownership of it to his daughter. The rest of his property was converted into money, and invested in funds in Great Britain. As soon as this arrangement was made, about the second year of the war, the Dove Cote became the permanent residence of the family: Lindsay preferring to remain here rather than to retire to England, hoping to escape the keen notice of the dominant party, and to find, in this classic and philosophical privacy, an oblivion of the rude cares that beset the pillow of every man who mingled in the strife of the day.

He was destined to a grievous disappointment. His wife, to whom he was romantically attached, was snatched from him by death, just at this interesting period. This blow, for a time, almost unseated his reason. The natural calm of such a mind as Lindsay's, is not apt to show paroxysms in grief: its sorrow was too still and deep for show. The flight of years, however, brought healing on their wings; and Mildred and Henry gradually resumed their father's countenance with flashes of cheerful thought, that daily grew broader and more abiding; till, at last, sense and duty completed their triumph, and once more gave Lindsay to his family, unburdened of his

grief, or, if not unburdened, conversing with it only in the secret hours of self-communion.

His hopes of ease and retirement were disappointed in another way. The sequesterment of the Dove Cote was not sufficient to shut out the noise, nor the intrigues of the war. His reputation as a man of education, of wealth, of good sense, and, especially as a man of aristocratic pretensions, irresistibly drew him into the agitated vortex of politics. His house was open to the visits of the tory leaders no less than to those of the other side; and, although this intercourse could not be openly maintained without risk, yet pretexts were not wanting occasionally to bring the officers and gentlemen in the British interest, to the Dove Cote. They came stealthily and in disguise, and they did not fail to involve him in the insidious schemes and base plottings by which a wary foe generally endeavours to smooth the way of invasion. The temporary importance which these connections conferred, and the assiduous appeal which it was the policy of the enemy to make to his loyalty, wrought upon the vanity of the scholar, and brought him, by degrees, from mere toleration of an intercourse that he at first sincerely sought to avoid, into a participation of the plans of those who courted his fellowship. Still, however, this was grudgingly given,—as much from the inaptitude of his character, as from a secret consciousness, at bottom, that it was contrary to the purpose that had induced him to seek the shelter of the woods. Unless, therefore, the spur was frequently applied to the side of his reluctant resolution, his zeal was apt to weary in its pace, or—to change my figure for one equally appropriate—to melt away in the sunny indolence of his temper.

I have said, that during the tenderer years of the children, and up to the period of the loss of their mother, they had received the most unremitting attention from their parents. The bereavement of his wife, the deep gloom that followed this event, and the now engrossing character of the war had, in some degree, relaxed Lindsay's vigilance over their nurture, although it had in no wise abated his affection for them: on the contrary, perhaps, this was more concentrated than ever. Mildred had

grown up to the blossom-time of life in the possession of every personal attraction. From the fanciful ideas of education adopted by her father, or rather from the sedulous care with which he experimented upon her capacity, and devoted himself to the task of directing and waiting upon the expansion of her intellect, she had made acquirements much beyond her years, and altogether of a character unusual to her sex. An ardent and persevering temper had imparted a singular enthusiasm to her pursuits; and her air, though not devoid of playfulness, might be said to be habitually abstracted and self-communing.

As the war advanced, her temper and situation both enlisted her as a partizan in the questions which it brought into discussion; and whilst her father's opinions were abhorrent to this struggle for independence, she, on the other hand, unknown to him was casting her thoughts, feelings, affections and hopes, upon the broad waters of rebellion; and, if not expecting them to return to her, after many days, with increase of good, certainly believing that she was mingling them with those of patriots who were predestined to the brightest meed of glory.

A father is not apt to reason with a daughter; the passions and prejudices of a parent are generally received as principles by the child; and most fathers, counting upon this instinct, deem it enough to make known the bent merely of their own opinions, without caring to argue them. This mistake will serve to explain the wide difference which is sometimes seen between the most tenderly attached parent and child, in those deeper sentiments that do not belong to the every-day concerns of life. Whilst, therefore, Mr. Lindsay took no heed how the seed of doctrine fructified and grew in the soil where he desired to plant it, it in truth fell upon ungenial ground and either was blown away by the wind, or perished for want of appropriate nourishment.

As the crisis became more momentous, and the discussion of national rights more rife, Mildred's predilections ran stronger on the republican side; and, at the opening of my story, she was a sincere and enthusiastic friend of American independence: a character, (which, however, it may be misdoubted by my female readers of the pre-

went day, nursed as they are in a lady-like apathy to all concerns of government, and little aware, in the lazy lap of peace, how vividly their own quick sensibilities may be enlisted by the strife of men,) neither rare nor inefficient amongst the matrons and maidens of the year seventy-six, some of whom,—now more than fifty years gone by,—are embalmed in the richest spices and holiest ointment of our country's memory.—

It is, however, due to truth to say, that Mildred's eager attachment to this cause was not altogether the free motion of patriotism. How often does some little under-current of passion, some slight and amiable prepossession,—modest and unobserved,—rise to the surface of our feelings, and there give its direction to the stream upon which floats all our philosophy! What is destiny but these under-currents that come whencesoever they list, unheeded at first, and irresistible ever afterwards!

My reader must be told that, before the war broke out, this enthusiastic girl had flitted across the path of Arthur Butler,—then a youth of rare faculty and promise, who combined with a gentle and modest demeanour an earnest devotion to his country, sustained by a chivalrous tone of honour that had in it all the fanciful disinterestedness of boyhood. It will not, therefore, appear wonderful that, amongst the golden opinions the young man was storing up in all quarters, some fragments of this grace should have made a lodgment in the heart of Mildred Lindsay.

Butler was a native of one of the lower districts of South Carolina, and was already the possessor, by inheritance, of what was then called a handsome fortune. He first met Mildred, under the safe conduct of her parents, at Annapolis in Maryland,—at that time the seat of opulence and fashion. There the wise and the gay, the beautiful and the rarely-gifted united in a splendid little constellation, in which wealth threw its sun-beam glitter over the wings of love, and learning and eloquence were warmed by the smiles of fair women: there gallant men gave the fascinations of wit to a festive circle unsurpassed in the new world, or the old, for its proportion of the graces that embellish, and the endowments that enrich

life. In this circle there was no budding beauty of softer charm than the young Mildred, nor was there amongst the gay and bright cavaliers that thronged the 'little academy' of Eden, (the governor of the province,) a youth of more favourable omen than Arthur Butler.

The war was at the very threshold, and angry men thought of turning the plough-share into the sword. Amongst these was Butler,—an unsparing denouncer of the policy of Britain, and an unhesitating volunteer in the ranks of her opposers. It was at this eventful time that he met Mildred. I need hardly add that under these inauspicious circumstances they began to love. Every interview afterwards, (and they frequently saw each other at Williamsburg and Richmond) only developed more completely the tale of love that nature was telling in the heart of each.

Butler received from Congress, an ensign's commission in the continental army, and was employed for a few months in the recruiting service at Charlottesville. This position favoured his views and enabled him to visit at the Dove Cote. His intercourse with Mildred, up to this period, had been allowed by Lindsay to pass without comment: it was regarded but as the customary and common place civility of polite society. Mildred's parents had no sympathy in her lover's sentiments, and consequently no especial admiration of his character, and they had not yet doubted their daughter's loyalty to be made of less stern materials than their own. Her mother was the first to perceive that the modest maiden awaited the coming of the young soldier with a more anxious forethought than betokened an unoccupied heart. How painfully did this perception break upon her! It opened upon her view a foresight of that unhappy sequence of events that attends the secret struggle between parental authority and filial inclination, when the absorbing interests of true love are concerned:—a struggle that so frequently darkens the fate of the noblest natures, and whose history supplies the charm of so many a melancholy and thrilling page. Mrs. Lindsay had an invincible objection to the contemplated alliance, and immediately awakened the attention of her husband to the subject. From this mo-

ment Butler's reception at the Dove Cote was cold and formal; and Mr. Lindsay did not delay to express to his daughter a marked aversion to her intimacy with a man so uncongenial to his own taste. I need not dwell upon the succession of incidents that followed:—are they not written in every book that tells of young hearts loving in despite of authority? Let it suffice, to say that Butler, 'many a time and oft,' hied stealthily and with a lover's haste, to the Dove Cote where, 'under the shade of melancholy boughs,' or sometimes of good Mistress Dimock's roof, he found means to meet and exchange vows of constancy with the lady of his love.

Thus passed the first year of the war. The death of Mrs. Lindsay, to which I have before adverted, now occurred. The years of mourning were doubly afflictive to Mildred. Her father's grief hung as heavily upon her as her own, and to this was added a total separation from Butler. He had joined his regiment and was sharing the perils of the northern campaigns, and subsequently of those which ended in the subjugation of Carolina and Georgia. During all this period he was enabled to keep up an uncertain and irregular correspondence with Mildred, and he had once met her in secret, for a few hours only, at Mistress Dimock's, during the autumn immediately preceding the date of the opening of my story.

Mrs. Lindsay, upon her death bed, had spoken to her husband in the most emphatic terms of admonition against Mildred's possible alliance with Butler, and conjured him to prevent it by whatever means might be in his power. Besides this, she made a will directing the distribution of a large jointure estate in England between her two children, coupling, with the bequest, a condition of forfeiture, if Mildred married without her father's approbation.

I have now to relate an incident in the life of Philip Lindsay, which throws a sombre colouring over most of the future fortunes of Mildred and Arthur, as they are hereafter to be developed in my story.

The lapse of years, Lindsay supposed, would wear out the first favourable impressions made by Arthur Butler upon his daughter. Years had now passed: he knew nothing of the secret correspondence between the parties,

and he had hoped that all was forgotten. He could not help, however, perceiving, that Mildred had grown reserved, and that her deportment seemed to be controlled by some secret care that sat upon her heart. She was anxious, solicitious, and more inclined, than became her youth, to be alone. Her household affections took a softer tone, like one in grief. These things did not escape her father's eye.

It was on a night in June, a little more than a year before the visit of Butler and Robinson which I have narrated in a former chapter, that the father and daughter had a free communion together, in which it was his purpose to penetrate into the causes of her disturbed spirit. The conference was managed with an affectionate and skillful address on the part of the father, and 'sadly borne' by Mildred. It is sufficient to say that it revealed to him a truth of which he was previously but little aware, namely, that neither the family afflictions nor the flight of two years had rooted out the fond predilection of Mildred for Arthur Butler. When this interview ended Mildred retired weeping to her chamber, and Lindsay sat in his study absorbed in meditation. The object in life nearest to his heart was the happiness of his daughter; and for the accomplishment of this what sacrifice would he not make? He minutely recalled to memory all the passages of her past life. What error of education had he committed, that she thus, at womanhood, was found wandering along a path to which he had never led her—which, indeed, he had ever taught her to avoid? What accident of fortune had brought her into this—as he must consider it,—unhappy relation? 'How careful have I been,'—he said,—'to shut out all the inducements that might give a complexion to her tastes and principles different from my own! How sedulously have I waited upon her footsteps from infancy onward, to shield her from the influences that might mislead her pliant mind! And yet in this, the most determinate act of her life,—that which is to give the hue to the whole of her coming fortune, the only truly momentous event in her history—how strangely has it befallen!—'

In such a strain did his thoughts pursue this harassing

subject. The window of his study was open and he sat near it, looking out upon the night. The scene around him was of a nature to awaken his imagination and lead his musings towards the preternatural and invisible world. It was past midnight, and the bright moon was just sinking down the western slope of the heavens, journeying through the fantastic and gorgeous clouds, that, as they successively caught her beam, stood like promontories jutting upon a waveless ocean,—their rich profiles tipped with burnished silver. The long black shadows of the trees slept in enchanted stillness upon the earth: the night-wind breathed through the foliage, and brought the distant gush of the river fitfully upon his ear. There was a witching harmony and music in the landscape that sorted with the solitary hour, and conjured up thoughts of the world of shadows. Lindsay's mind began to run upon the themes of his favourite studies: the array of familiar spirits rose upon his mental vision; the many recorded instances of what was devoutly believed the interference of the dead in the concerns of the living, came fresh, at this moment, to his memory, and made him shudder at his lonesomeness.—Struggling with this conception, it struck him with an awe that he was unable to master:—‘some invisible counsellor,’—he muttered,—‘some mysterious intelligence, now holds my daughter in thrall, and flings his spell upon her existence. The powers that mingle unseen in the affairs of mortals,—that guide to good or lead astray—have wafted this helpless bark into the current that sweeps onward, unstayed by man. I cannot contend with destiny.—She is thy child, Gertrude,’—he exclaimed, apostrophizing the spirit of his departed wife.—‘She is thine, and thou wilt hover near her and protect her from those who contrive against her peace: thou wilt avert the ill and shield thy daughter!’

Excited almost to phrenzy, terrified and exhausted in physical energy, Lindsay threw his head upon his hand and rested it against the window-sill. A moment elapsed of almost inspired madness, and when he raised his head and looked outward upon the lawn, he beheld the pale image of the being he had invoked, gliding through the shrubbery at the farthest verge of the level ground. The

ghastly visage was bent upon him, the hand steadily pointed towards him, and as the figure slowly passed away the last reverted gaze was directed to him.—“Great God!”—he ejaculated,—“that form—that form!”—and fell senseless into his chair.

Before the night was entirely spent, the clouds had gathered into a dense mass, and broke in the terrors of a thunderstorm. The sharp lightening flashed through the windows, and one of its bolts struck down the sturdiest limb of an oak, at no great distance from the dwelling; and the uproar alarmed and roused the household. Mildred betook herself to her father’s chamber and, tapping at the door, received no answer. She entered:—he was not there. A search was made; and he was found, where I have described him, stretched upon the floor, scarce breathing or conscious of existence.

A few weeks restored Lindsay to his usual health, but it was long before he regained the equanimity of his mind. He had seen enough to confirm his faith in the speculations of that pernicious philosophy which is wrapt up in the studies of which I have before given the outline, and he was, henceforth, oftentimes melancholy, moody and reserved in spite of all the resolves of duty, and in defiance of a temper naturally placid and kind.

Let us pass from this unpleasant incident to a theme of more cheerful import:—the loves of Mildred and Arthur. I have said these two had secret meetings. They were not entirely without a witness. There was a confidant in all their intercourse: no other than Henry Lindsay, who united to the reckless jollity of youth, an almost worshipping love of his sister. His thoughts and actions were ever akin to her’s. Henry was therefore a safe depository of the precious secret; and as he could not but think Arthur Butler a good and gallant comrade, he determined that his father was altogether on the wrong side in respect to the love affair and, by a natural sequence, wrong also in his politics.

Henry had several additional reasons for this last opinion. The whole countryside was kindled into a martial flame, and there was nothing to be heard but drums and trumpets.—There were rifle-corps raising;—and they

were all dressed in hunting-shirts;—and bugles were blowing and horses were neighing: how could a gallant of sixteen resist it?—Besides, Stephen Foster, the woodman, right under the brow of the Dove Cote, was a lieutenant of mounted riflemen and had, for some time past, been training Henry in the mystery of his weapon; and had given him divers lessons on the horn to sound the signals; and had enticed him furtively to ride in a platoon, on parade, whereof he had dubbed Henry, corporal or deputy-corporal. All this worked well for Arthur and Mildred.

Mr. Lindsay was not ignorant of Henry's popularity in the neighbourhood, nor how much he was petted by the volunteer soldiery. He did not object to this, as it served to quiet suspicion of his own dislike to the cause, and diverted the observation of the adherents of what he called the rebel government, from his own motives; whilst, at the same time, he deemed it no other than a gew-gaw that played upon the boyish fancy of Henry without reaching his principles.

Mildred, on the contrary, did not so regard it. She had inspired Henry with her own sentiments, and now carefully trained him up to feel warmly the interests of the war, and to prepare himself by discipline for the hard life of a soldier. She early awakened in him a wish to render service in the field, and a resolution to accomplish it as soon as the occasion might arrive. Amongst other things, too, she taught him to love Arthur Butler and keep his counsel.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MANSION OF A GENTLEMAN AND A SCHOLAR.

THE site of the Dove Cote was eminently picturesque. It was an area of level ground containing, perhaps, two acres, on the summit of a hill that, on one side, overhung the Rockfish river and, on the other, rose by a gentle sweep from the champaign country below. This summit might have been as much as three hundred feet above the bed

of the stream, and was faced on that side by a bold, rocky precipice, not absolutely perpendicular, but broken into stages or platforms, where grassy mould had accumulated, and where the sweet-briar and the laurel, and clusters of the azalea shot up in profuse luxuriance. The fissures of the crag had also collected their handful of soil and gave nourishment to straggling vines; and every where the ash or pine and, not unfrequently, the dogwood took possession of such spots upon the rocky wall, as these adventurous and cliff-loving trees had found congenial to their nature.

The opposite or northern bank of the river had an equal elevation and jutted forward so near to the other as to leave between them a cleft, which suggested the idea of some sudden abruption of the earth in those early paroxysms that geologists have deemed necessary to account for some of the features of our continent: a strong and expert arm might have thrown a pebble from one side to the other. Below was heard the ceaseless brattle of the waters, as they ran over and amongst the rocks which probably constituted the *debris* formed in the convulsion that opened this chasm. It was along through this obscure dell that the road, with which my reader is acquainted, found place between the margin of the stream and the foot of the rocks. The country on either side generally preserved the elevation of these lofty grounds, so as to give to the river the appearance of having worn its channel so much below the common level of the region. At some points, however, and particularly on the opposite side from the Dove Cote, the general aspect of the country was diversified by high knolls and broken masses of mountain-land; and the Dove Cote itself occupied a station sufficiently above the surrounding district to give it a prospect, eastward, of several miles in extent. From this point the eye might trace the valley of the Rockfish, by the abrupt hill-sides that hemmed it in, and by the growth of sombre pines that coated the steeps where nothing else could find a foot-hold. Not far below, in this direction, was to be seen the Fawn's Tower, a singular pinnacle of rock, which had acquired its name from the protection it was said to have afforded to a

young deer against the assault of the hounds; the hard-pressed animal, as the tradition relates, having gained this insulated point by a bound that baffled the most adventurous of his pursuers; and admiration at the successful boldness of his leap having won from the huntsman the favour that spared his life.

With the exception of a large chestnut near the edge of the cliff, and of some venerable oaks that had counted centuries before the white man rested his limbs beneath their shade, the native growth of the forest had been removed by Lindsay from the summit I have described, and he had substituted for the wild garniture of nature a few of the choicest trees of the neighbouring woods. Here he had planted the elm, the holly and the linden tree, the cedar and the arbor vitæ. This platform was semicircular, and was bounded by a terrace or walk of gravel that swept around its circumference. The space enclosed was covered with a natural grass which the frequent use of the scythe had brought to the resemblance of velvet; and the lower side of the terrace was guarded by a hedge-row of cedar, trimmed to the height of about four feet. Over this green wall, as the spectator walked forth in fair summer time, might he look out upon the distant woods and meadows; and there he might behold the high-road showing itself, at distant intervals, upon the hill-sides:—and in the bottom lands, that lay open to the sun through the forest-bound valleys, might he see herds of grazing cattle, or fields of yellow grain, or, perchance, the slow moving wain burdened with hay,—or slower moving plough.

The mansion itself partook of the character of the place. It was perched,—to use a phrase peculiarly applicable to its position,—almost immediately at that point where the terrace made an angle with the cliff, being defended by a stone parapet through which an iron wicket opened upon a flight of rough-hewn steps, that terminated in a path way leading down to the river.

The main building was of stone, consisting of one lofty story and capped with a steep roof, which curved so far over the front as to furnish a broad rustic porch that rested almost upon the ground. The slim pillars of

this porch were concealed by lattice work which was overgrown with creeping vines; and the windows of the contiguous rooms, on either side of a spacious hall, opened to the floor, and looked out upon the lawn and upon the quiet landscape far beyond. One of these apartments was also accessible through the eastern gable by a private doorway shaded by a light verandah, and was appropriated by Lindsay to his library. This portal seemed almost to hang over the rock, having but the breadth of the terrace between it and the declivity, and showing no other foreground than the parapet, that was here a necessary defence against the cliff, and from which the romantic dell of the river was seen in all its wildness.

There were two or three other members of the mansion, all constructed in the same style of architecture, united to this in such a manner as to afford an uninterrupted communication, and to furnish a range of chambers for the use of the family. A rustic effect was every where preserved. Stacks of chimneys shot up in grotesque array; and the heavy, old-fashioned dormant windows looked quaintly down from the peaked roof;—choice exotics planted in boxes were tastefully arranged upon the lawn; cages with singing birds were suspended against the wall; and the whole mass of building, extending along the verge of the cliff so as to occupy the entire diameter of the semicircle, perhaps one hundred and fifty feet,—sorted by its simplicity of costume, if I may so speak, and by its tidy beauty, with the close shaven grass-plot and its trim shades.

Above the whole, flinging their broad and gnarled arms amongst the chimney-tops, and forming a pleasing contrast with the artificial embellishments of this spot, some ancient oaks, in primeval magnificence, reared their time-honoured trunks, and no less sheltered the habitation from the noon-tide heats, than they afforded an asylum to the ring dove and his mate,—or to the countless travellers of the air that here stopped for rest or for food,—or, peradventure,—for the gratification of a wild fowl's fancy.

Such was the general aspect of the Dove Cote; a spot where a philosopher might glide through life in unbroken

contemplation; where a wearied statesman might betake himself to reassemble the scattered forces of intellect for new enterprises; where the artist might repair to study with advantage the living graces of God's own painting; and where young beauty might bud and bloom amongst the most delicate and graceful forms of earth;—where she might gather health in the breeze and content in the joy of the seasons,—where her proportions of loveliness might expand to the measure of perfection, and her mind imbibe the virtues and affections that should make it more beautiful than her form.

The interior of the dwelling was capacious and comfortable. Its furniture, suitable to the estate of the owner, was plain and adapted to a munificent rather than to an ostentatious hospitality. It was only in the library that any evidence might be seen of large expense. Here the books were ranged from the floor to the ceiling, with scarcely an interval, except where a few choice paintings had found space or the bust of some ancient worthy. One or two ponderous lounging chairs stood in the apartment; and the footstep of the visiter was dulled into silence, by the soft nap of (what in that day was a rare and costly luxury) a Turkey carpet. This was in all respects an apartment of ease, and it was provided with every incentive to beguile a student into silent and luxurious communion with the spirit of the sages around him,—whose subtlest thoughts and holiest breathings,—whose most volatile-fancies had been caught up, fixed, and turned into tangible substance more indestructible than adamant, by the magic of letters.

I have trespassed on the patience of my reader to give him a somewhat minute description of the Dove Cote, principally because I hope thereby to open his mind to a more adequate conception of the character of Philip Lindsay. By looking at a man in his own dwelling, and observing his domestic habits, I will venture to affirm, it shall scarcely, in any instance, fail to be true, that if there be seen a tasteful arrangement of matters necessary to his comfort; if his household be well ordered and his walks clean and well rolled, and his grassplots neat; and if there be no slovenly inattention to repairs, but thrift against

waste, and plenty for all; and if to these be added habits of early rising and comely attire;—and, above all, if there be books, many books, well turned and carefully tended,—that man is one to warm up at the coming of a gentleman; to open his doors to him; to take him to his heart, and to do him the kindnesses of life: he is a man to hate what is base, and to stand apart from the mass, as one who will not have his virtue tainted: he is a man, moreover, whose worldly craft may be so smothered and suppressed, in the predominance of the household affections, that the skilful and the designing, alas, may ever practise with success their plans against him.

CHAPTER IX.

AN INTRIGUE.

I MUST now beg leave to introduce my reader to the library described in the last chapter, where, beside a small table covered with papers, and lighted by two tall candles, sat Philip Lindsay, with a perplexed and thoughtful brow: opposite to him, in an easy-chair, reclined his guest, Mr. Tyrrel,—a man whose appearance might entitle him to claim something like thirty-five years, and whose shrewd and intellectual expression of countenance, to which an air of decision was given by what might be called an intense eye, denoted a person conversant with the business of life; whilst an easy and flexible address no less distinctly announced him one habituated to the most polished society. The time of this meeting corresponded with that of the interview between Arthur and Mildred, beneath the Fawn's Tower.

It is necessary only to premise that these two had frequently conferred together, within the last two or three days, upon the subject with which they were now engaged.

'Sir Henry Clinton does me too much honour by this confidence,'—said Lindsay:—'he overrates my influence amongst the gentlemen of the province. Truly, Mr. Tyrrel, I am well persuaded that neither my precept nor

my example would weigh a feather in the scale against the heady course of this rebellion.'

'We are seldom competent to judge of the weight of our own influence,'—said Tyrrel.—'I might scarce expect you to speak otherwise than you do. But I, who have the opportunity to know, take upon myself to say that many gentlemen of note in this province, who are at present constrained by the fear of the new government, look with anxiety to you. They repose faith in your discretion, and would follow your lead. If an excuse be necessary, you might afford them some pretext of pastime to visit the Dove Cote. Here you might concert your plan of co-operation with our friends in the south.'

'Tis a rash thought,'—replied Lindsay.—'This little nook of woodland quiet has never yet been disturbed with the debates of men who meditated the spilling of blood. God forbid that these peaceful walls should hereafter echo back the words that speak of such a purpose!'

'It is to spare the shedding of blood, Mr. Lindsay, and to bring speedy peace to a distracted country that we invoke you and other friends into counsel. A single battle may decide the question of mastery over the province. We are well assured that the moment Lord Cornwallis reaches the Roanoke'—

'Cornwallis has yet to win the ground he stands upon,'—interrupted Lindsay:—'there may be many a deadly blow struck before he slakes his thirst in the waters of that river: many a proud head may be low, before that day.'

'Think you, sir,'—said Tyrrel, rising as he spoke,—'that this patched and ragged levy—this ague-stricken army that is now creeping through the pines of North Carolina, under the command of that pompous pretender, Gates, are the men to dispute with his majesty's forces their right to any inch of soil they choose to occupy?—It will be a merry day that we meet them, Mr. Lindsay.—We have hitherto delayed our campaign until the harvest was gathered: that is now done, and we shall speedily bring this hero of Saratoga to his reckoning. Then, following at the heels of the runagates, his Lordship, you

may be prepared to hear, within two months from this day, will be within friendly hail of the Dove Cote.'

'You speak like a boastful soldier, Mr. Tyrrel. It is not unlikely that his lordship may foil Gates and turn him back;—such I learn to be the apprehension of the more sagacious amongst the continental officers themselves;—but whether that mischance is to favour your incursion into this province may be worth a soberer study than, I doubt, you have given the question. The path of invasion is ever a difficult road when it leads against a united people. You mistake both the disposition and the means of these republicans. They have bold partisans in the field and eloquent leaders in their senates. The nature of the strife sorts well with their quick and earnest tempers; and by this man's-play of war we breed up soldiers who delight in the game.—Rebellion has long since marched beyond the middle ground, and has no thought of retreat. What was at first the mere overflow of popular passion has been hardened into principle,—like a fiery stream of lava which first rolls in a flood, and then turns into stone. The delusion of republicanism, like all delusions, is embraced with more enthusiasm than men ever embrace truth. We deem too lightly of these men and their cause, and we have already, more than once, suffered for the error. When they expelled Dunmore they committed treason against the British crown; and they are wise enough to know that that cup, once tasted, must be drained to the bottom: they have, therefore, imbrued their hands the deeper in rebellion. They have raised their idol of democracy high, and have fenced it about with the penalties of confiscation and death to those who refuse to bow before it: and now they stand pledged to the prosecution of their unnatural war, by such a bond of fate as unites mariners who have rashly ventured forth upon a raging sea, in a bark of doubtful strength;—their minds braced up, by the thought of instant perdition, to the daring effort necessary to reach their haven.'

'That haven shall they never reach,'—cried Tyrrel impatiently.—'The black billow of fate shall roll over their shipwrecked crew. Let them invoke the aid of their patron devils! We have a spell shall conjure them back

again to their own hell,—else there is no virtue in the forged steel which these rebels have felt before.’

‘The battle is not always to the strong,’—said Lindsay,—‘nor is the craft of soldiership without its chances.’

‘If we had listened, my friend,’—said Tyrrel,—‘to musty proverbs, Charleston would have this day been in the secure and peaceful possession of the enemy. All that you say against our present scheme was heretofore urged,—though not with such authority, perhaps—against the invasion of Carolina. And yet how prettily have we gainsaid the prophets! Look at their principal town surrendered,—all the country strongholds delivered up,—the people flocking to our standard for protection,—and the whole province lifting up a voice of gratitude for the deliverance we have wrought them. They are even now arming themselves in our behalf, whilst the shattered fragments of the rebel force are flying to the swamps and their mountain fastnesses. Why should not the same game be as well played in Virginia?—Trust me, Mr. Lindsay, your caution somewhat overleaps that wholesome moderation, which I do not deny is necessary to check a too sanguine reckoning. Come, good sir, lend us a more auspicious counsel. Sir Henry relies much upon your wisdom and will not, with good heart, forego your service.’

‘Sir Henry has sadly disturbed my repose,’—returned Lindsay.—‘To tell the truth, I have no stomach for this business.—Here, I am native to the province: I have found old friends separated from me; early associations torn up by the roots; and the elements which fed my strongest personal attachments poisoned, by this accursed spirit of revolution. I would hide my head from the storm and die in these shades in peace.’

‘It is not for Mr. Philip Lindsay, nor such as he,’—replied Tyrrel,—‘to desert his sovereign in his hour of need.’

‘God forgive me for the thought, Mr. Tyrrel, but it remains yet to be proved who most faithfully serve their sovereign,—they who counsel peace, or they who push war to its fatal extremes. There lives not a man within the realm of England, to whom I would yield in devotion

to the glory of our country. Once make it clear to my judgment that we may hope to regain the lost allegiance of this province by the sacrifice of life and fortune and, dearly as I cherish the welfare of those around me, I will obey the first summons to the field, and peril this worthless existence of mine in bloody fight. Yea, if need be, I will, with my own hand, apply the torch to this peaceful abode, and give it over a smoking ruin to the cause.'

'I know you too well,'—replied Tyrrel,—'to doubt the sincerity of your words. But is it not obvious that the war must inevitably tend to this field? Having gained the Carolinas, should we turn our backs as soon as we have reached the confines of Virginia? On the contrary, does not every obligation of honour impel us to maintain and protect our friends here? The conquest of Virginia is an easier enterprise than you deem it. If the continentals can muster ten thousand men, we, assuredly, may double that number,—counting our provincials levied in the south. We have money and all the means of war, whilst this crippled Congress has drained from the people their last groat; their wretched troops will disband from mere want of supplies. They may expect no aid from the north;—for there, by St. George and the dragon to boot! Sir Henry will furnish them sufficient motive to stay at home! We come animated by victories, full of mettle and vigour; they meet us broken by defeats, dejected and torn to pieces by mutiny. Never did treason or rebellion array itself with more certainty of punishment than this!'

'I have read,'—said Lindsay—'how John Hampden resisted the exaction of twenty shillings of ship money, and for that pittance dared the displeasure of Charles and his Star Chamber: how he voted the impeachment of the judges who were supple enough to warrant the imposition: how, in this cause, he drew the sword and threw away the scabbard: how he brought Strafford to the block for levying war against the commons of England:—and through all that disastrous time, have I read that Charles promised the cavaliers splendid victories, and derided the feeble means of those who were in arms against him;—

yet Hampden shrunk not from the struggle. To me it seems there is a strange resemblance between the congress now sitting at Philadelphia and the parliament of 1640; and this George Washington might, methinks, claim kindred with John Hampden.—I will not seek for further likenesses.’—

‘If I read that history aright,’—replied Tyrrel,—‘Hampden met his reward at Chalgrove, and Cromwell turned his crop-eared parliament out of doors.—We may, peradventure, find a Chalgrove on this continent;—and Sir Henry Clinton will most probably save the wisecracks at Philadelphia from the intrusion of an upstart Cromwell.’

‘It were over-bold in us to count on that, Mr. Tyrrel. I am the enemy of these men and their purpose, but I cannot deem otherwise of them than as misguided subjects of the king, frenzied by the imagination of grievances. They are men of good intellects and honest hearts, misled by passion. I would that we could give their tempers time to cool. I would, even now, preach moderation and compromise to his majesty’s ministers.’

‘The die is long since cast,’—said Tyrrel,—‘and all that remains now is to take the hazard of the throw. At this moment, whilst we debate, friend and foe are whetting their swords for a deadly encounter on the fields of Carolina. It is too late to talk of other abatement. Assuredly, my good friend, our destiny directs us to this province: and the time has come when you must decide what course you will take. It has been our earnest wish—Sir Henry’s letters, there upon the table, anxiously unfold it—to have you up and active in the cause. Why will you disappoint so fair a hope?’

‘Alas! Mr. Tyrrel,—it is a thorny path you would have me tread. Think you I am the man to win my way through these intricacies? I that live in the shelter of these woods by sufferance merely—an unmolested outlaw, to speak soberly, whom these fanatics of liberty have forborne for the sake of past acquaintance and present peaceful habits? Am I not girded round about with the hot champions of independence? Look amongst these hills—there is not a cabin, not a woodman’s hut,

no, nor stately dwelling whose roof defends one friend to the royal cause, but mine own. My lips are sealed; my very thoughts are guarded, lest I give room to think I mean to fly from my neutrality. These papers that lie upon that table might cost me my life: your presence here, were your purpose known, might consign me to captivity or exile:—one random word spoken might give me over to the censures of the power that holds its usurped domination in the province.—What aid may be expected from one so guarded, fettered, watched and powerless?—

‘And can you patiently,’—exclaimed Tyrrel,—‘bow to this oppression? You, a native born freeman of the province—a Briton, nursed in the sunny light of liberty! Shall your freedom of speech be circumscribed,—your footsteps be followed by spies and traitors,—your very inmost thoughts be read and brought up to the censure of the judgment seat?—Shall these things be, and the blood still continue to run coolly and temperately through your veins!—There are ills, Mr. Lindsay, which even your calm philosophy may not master.—But perhaps, I have mistaken your temper:—these evidences, at least, shall not put you in peril,’—he said, as he took up the letters from the table, and held them over the candle, and then threw the flaming mass upon the hearth.—‘That fear, I hope, is removed;—and as for my presence here,—one word briefly spoken, and it shall not longer jeopard your safety.’—

Lindsay looked fixedly at his companion as he destroyed the papers, and then said with a stern emphasis—

‘Your duty, sir, is in the field. You have been bred to a profession that teaches you blind obedience to orders, and to take glory in the presence of danger. It is not your part to weigh the right of the cause, nor to falter in the execution of any foul purpose of blood, so that it come under the name of honourable warfare. Therefore I excuse this unbecoming warmth:—but do not presume, upon the hazardous nature of your calling, and fancy that it implies more fidelity to the king, than the allegiance of his more peaceful subjects.—It is a thought

unworthy of you that fear of disaster to myself,—be it tenfold more imminent than it has yet been,—should arrest my step in that path where my country's honour, or my sovereign's command, bids me advance.'

'Worthy and excellent friend!'—said Tyrrel, taking Lindsay's hand,—'I have done you wrong. I am rash and headlong in my temper, and my tongue often speaks what my heart disavows. I am little better than a boy, Mr. Lindsay, and a foolish one—I humbly crave your pardon.'—

'Speak on,'—said Lindsay—

'Then briefly this. Your situation is all that you have described it. Sir Henry is aware of the trial he imposes upon you. He would have you act with the caution which your wisdom dictates; and if it should become necessary to speak that word which is to bring the wrath of the rebels upon your head, remember there is sanctuary and defence under the broad banner of England. Who so welcome there as Philip Lindsay? Even at this moment our councils should be tempered by your presence, and it becomes almost a patriotic duty to pluck you from the seclusion of the Dove Cote, and give you a share in the stirring events of the day. Sir, the country has a claim upon your services, scarce compatible with the idle contemplation of this momentous trial of strength.'—

Lindsay had advanced to the window, where he remained looking over the moon-lit scene. His companion stood close beside him, and after a short interval took his arm, when they stepped forth upon the porch, and sauntered backward and forward, as Tyrrel continued—

'The government would not be unmindful of the benefits you might confer. There are offices of trust and dignity to be filled in this province when it shall be restored to its allegiance. The highest post would not be unfily bestowed, if it should be assigned to you. Sir Henry Clinton bids me speak of that, as of a subject that has already occupied his thoughts. It would give grace and dignity to our resumed authority, to have it illustrated by the accomplished scholar and discreet statesman, who has, before this, discharged important and difficult trusts with a fidelity that has won all men's esteem.

And then, my dear sir,'—he added after a pause,—'who may say that it shall not be Sir Philip Lindsay, or even something yet higher?—a coronet would not be an honour unsuited even to the wilds of Virginia.—His majesty is not slow to discern worth, nor backward to raise it to its proper station. These are toys and baubles to you, Mr. Lindsay,—but they are still worth the seeking. You have a son to follow you.'

'Ah! there, Mr. Tyrrel, you touch me more nearly than you imagine. You remind me by this language that I have also a daughter. As to Henry, he has a temper and a capacity to make his own way through the world. I fear not for him—nor would I seek for honours to add to his name. But my Mildred! You know not what emotions the thought of her, in these troubles, costs me. Who shall guard and defend her, whilst I pursue this way-laid road of ambition? What sanctuary should she find under a war-encircled banner, should misfortune assail me, and adversity separate us? Alas, alas!—that is the spell that like a net cast over my limbs, makes me feeble and submissive.'—

'I have not been without my solicitude, Mr. Lindsay, on that subject,'—said Tyrrel. 'You yesterday did me the honour to say that my proposal in regard to Miss Lindsay was not distasteful to you. Could my ardent wish but be accomplished, she should be placed in safety, assured of ample and kind protection. If, haply, her thoughts should incline to a favourable reception of my offer,—which I would fain persuade myself her reverence for you may render not altogether improbable, when she knows that you deem well of my suit,—we might remove her to Charleston, where, secure amidst assiduous friends, she would pass the brief interval of alarm, and leave you free to act on this theatre as your honour and duty may impel you.'

'Mildred will not leave me,'—said Lindsay;—'my dear daughter would suffer a thousand deaths in the anxiety of such a separation.'

'Then why not accompany her to Charleston?' asked Tyrrel. 'Your presence there would be equally efficient as at head quarters—perhaps more so.'

'There are other obstacles, Mr. Tyrrel. You talk of Mildred as if her heart were to be disposed of at my bidding. You do not know her. I have long struggled to subdue an attachment that has bound her to our worst enemy,—I fear with little success. I have trusted to time to wear out what I deemed a mere girlish liking; but it seems to me the traces fade but slowly from her heart.'

'I know of whom you speak'—said Tyrrel,—'that hair-brained enthusiast Butler. It is a freakish and transient passion, and cannot but fall into forgetfulness. Miss Lindsay has from circumstance been but little conversant with the world, and, like an inexperienced girl, has fostered in solitude a romantic affection. That alone should be a motive to remove her into a busier scene. Besides, this Butler will be himself forced to give over his hopeless aim—if he has not done so before this:—measures are already taken,—and I do not scruple to tell you, at my instance—to confiscate his broad lands in Carolina to his majesty's use. The close of this war will find him penniless, and not unlikely, my dear sir, I myself may be the possessor of his inheritance—I have some pledge of the pre-emption of these lands at a small fee.'

'It will win you no favour with Mildred'—said Lindsay—to tell her that you succeed by such a title to this man's wealth. She is a wayward girl, and is not used to crosses. Her devotion to her purpose, as it sometimes excites my admiration, gives me, in the present case, cause of profound alarm.'

'You have spoken to her on this subject?'—

'I have not'—replied Lindsay—'and almost fear to broach it. I can, therefore, give you no encouragement. Some little time hence—perhaps to-morrow—I may sound her feelings. But remember, as her father I claim no right beyond that of advice. I shall think myself fortunate if, by giving a new direction to the current of her affections, I can divert her mind from the thoughts of an alliance to me the most hateful—to her full of future misery. A maiden's fancies are scarcely intelligible even to a father.'

'These subjects require meditation'—said Tyrrel. 'I will not press them further upon your thoughts to-night.'

‘Heaven guide us in the way of safety and happiness!’—said Lindsay, almost in a whisper. ‘Good night, my friend.’

When Tyrrel was left alone he strolled forward to the terrace, and passing round to that end which overhung the cliff, near the door that opened from the library, he leaned his breast upon the parapet and looked down upon the wild and beautiful scenery of the valley. The night was calm and full of splendour. The tops of the trees that grew in the ravine almost perpendicularly beneath his eye, here and there caught the bright moon-beam where it glowed like silver, and the shades, rendered deeper by the contrast, seemed to brood over a black and impenetrable abyss. Occasional glimpses were seen of the river below, as it sparkled along such portions of its channel as were not hidden in darkness. The coolness of the hour and the solitude of the spot were not ungrateful to the mood of Tyrrel’s mind; whilst the monotonous music of the river fell pleasantly upon his ear. He was not unheedful of these charms in the scene, though his thoughts were busily employed with a subject foreign to their contemplation.

‘Have I advanced’—was the tenor of his present self-communion—‘the purpose I have so much at heart, by this night’s conference? Could I but engage Lindsay in the issues of this war,—so commit him in its purposes and its plots as to render his further residence at the Dove Cote insecure, then would I already have half-compassed my point. Where could he remove but to Charleston? And there, amidst the blandishments of friends and the allurements of gay society, I might make sure of Mildred. There, cut off from all means of hearing of this Butler, and swayed, as she must necessarily be, by the current of loyal feelings, she would learn to detest his foul rebellion, and soon lose her favour for the rebel. Then, too, the confiscation of his lands—but soft, I am not so sure of that!—she is rich and would make a merit of sharing her fortune with a man whose brave resistance of oppression—for so, doubtless, Butler persuades her it is—has cost him his wealth:—the confiscation should not seem, at least, to be my doing. Well, well,—let her be

brought to Charleston. Any change were better than to remain here, where anxiety and suspense and solitude nurse and soften her woman's affections, and teach her to fancy her lover whatsoever her imagination delights to think on. Then may not the chances of war assist me? This Butler, all men say, is brave and adventurous. He should be short-lived. Whatever ill may befall him cannot but work good to me. Yet Lindsay has such a sickly caution—such scruple against involving himself in the scheme—I could almost find it in my heart to have it told amongst his neighbours that he is in correspondence with the enemy. Ha, that would be a bright device!—inform against myself!—No, no, I will not abuse his generous nature. Let him come fairly into the fold, and I will guard his gentle lambkin like a very shepherd. Then if we make him governor of the province—that will work well. Mildred will thank me for my zeal in that good purpose, at least; and I will marry her and possess her estate, if it be only to enable her to be grateful to me. 'Twill be a brave reward, and bravely shall it be won.

As Tyrrel ruminated over these topics, in the strain indicated by this sketch, the noise of footsteps ascending the rugged stairway of the cliff, and the opening of the iron wicket, but a short distance from where he leaned over the parapet, roused his attention, and put an end to this insidious and selfish communion with his own heart.

The cause of this interruption was soon apparent. Henry and Mildred entered through the gate and hurried along the path to that part of the terrace where Tyrrel stood. The shade of the house concealed him from their view until they were within a few paces. 'Ha, Miss Lindsay!—You are a late rambler'—he said, in a tone of gallantry.—'The dampness of the valley, at this hour, is not altogether safe: the ague is a sore enemy to romance;—beware of it.'—

'I am not afraid of the night,'—replied Mildred, as she increased the rapidity of her gait; then, turning immediately upon the porch, she almost ran, leaving Henry and Tyrrel in pursuit, until she reached the farthest window which was heard descending the moment she passed

through it into the parlour. When Tyrrel and Henry entered the same apartment she had disappeared.—

‘My sister is not well this evening,’—said Henry. ‘We strolled too late upon the river bank.’—

‘It was still an over hasty retreat’—muttered Tyrrel to himself.—‘It bodes not well for me. I will wager, Henry,’—he said, raising his voice,—‘that I can guess what you and your sister have been talking about.’

‘Let me hear.’—said Henry.

‘First,’—replied Tyrrel—‘she repeated some verses from Shakspeare about the moonlight sleeping on the bank—this is just the night for poetry—and then you both fell to talking sentiment,—and then, I’ll be bound, you had a ghost story,—and, by that time, you found you had got too far from the house and were a little frightened, and so came back as fast as you could.’—

‘You are as wrong,’—said Henry,—‘as my left arm, and that’s the opposite of right.—I have been telling sister Mildred how to bob for eels. Did you know that an eel will never pass a streak of moonlight for fear of being found out by the watchers?’

‘Indeed I did not.’

‘Well, sister Mildred is wiser than you are:—and as I have taught you that, I will go to bed.’—

Tyrrel was again left to resume his meditations, and to hatch his plots for invading the peace of the Dove Cote, on his pillow. To that sleepless pillow he now betook himself.

CHAPTER X.

TYRREL RETREATS.

THE next morning Tyrrel rose with the sun. He had passed a restless night, and now sought refreshment in the early breeze. With this purpose he descended to the river, and strayed along the dewy pathway which crept through the shrubbery on the right bank in the direction of the Fawn’s Tower. He had not wandered far before

he perceived a horseman moving along the road upon the opposite side.

‘Halloo—James Curry!—which way?—What news have you?’—

‘I seek you, sir,—I was on my way to the Dove Cote,’—replied the horseman, who at the same time turned his horse’s head to the river and, spurring the animal forward, plunged into the stream which was here still and deep enough to reach above his saddle flaps. After some floundering, the horse and rider gained the margin, where Tyrrel awaited them! The vigour of the animal, as well as the practised hand that held the rein, was shewn in the boldness of the attempt to climb the steep bank and break through the briars and bushes that here guarded it. As soon as Curry reached the level ground he dismounted.

‘In God’s name, man, what is the matter with your face?’—asked Tyrrel.

‘It is of that, amongst other things, that I came to speak to you,’—was the reply,—‘I have news for you.’

‘Speak, without prelude.—Tell me.’—

‘Major Butler slept last night at Mrs. Dimock’s.’—

‘And is there still?’

‘No, sir. He started at early dawn this morning,’—

‘To join Gates.’—

‘I think not. He talked of going to Ninety-Six—perhaps to Georgia.’—

‘So, ho.—The hawk hovers over that field!—Does he travel alone?’—

‘He has a giant in his company—a great ploughman by the name of Horse Shoe Robinson.—A quarrelsome rascal: he would needs pick a quarrel with me last night. And in the skirmish I got this face.’

‘Hell and the devil!—Did I not command you to bear yourself peaceably? Fool, will you risk our lives with your infernal broils? Now, I would wager, you told the fellow your name.’—

‘Little need of that, sir. He told it to me: said he knew me before. The fellow, for all his rough coat, is a regular trained soldier in the rebel service, and has met

me somewhere.—Heaven knows!—I don't remember him;—yet he isn't a man to see once and forget again.'—

'And me—did he speak of me?'

'He knew that I was in the employ of an English gentleman who was here at the Dove Cote. I have nothing especial to complain of in the man. He speaks soldierly enough: he said he would take no advantage of me for being here as long as our visit was peaceable.'

'Humph! And you believed him. And you must fight with him, like a brawling knave. When will you get an ounce of wit into that fool's head!—What time of day was it when this Butler arrived?'

'Long after night-fall.'

'Did you understand any thing of the purpose of his visit?'

'He talked much with Mistress Dimock, and I think their conversation related to the lady at the Dove Cote. I could hear but a few scattered words.'

'Away.—Here (throwing his purse to the horseman,) pay up your score at the inn, and at your greatest haste attend me on the river bank, immediately below Mr. Lindsay's house. Ask Mrs. Dimock to have a breakfast prepared for me.—Away, I will expect you in half an hour.'

Curry mounted his horse, and choosing a more convenient ford than that which he had passed, (for the jutting rocks, on this side, prevented his reaching Mrs. Dimocks without recrossing the river to the road,) he soon regained the track and was seen, almost at high speed, sweeping around the base of the Fawn's Tower.

Tyrrel returned hastily to the Dove Cote, and, seeking his valet, gave orders to have his portmanteau packed, his horses saddled and to be in waiting for him at the foot of the hill. These commands were speedily obeyed and every thing was in readiness for his journey before any of the family had made their appearance in the breakfast room.

Whilst Tyrrel meditated writing a line to explain to Lindsay his present sudden movement, and had drawn near a table for that purpose, he was saluted by the voice of Henry who had entered the apartment and stolen, unobserved, almost immediately behind his chair.

‘Booted and spurred, Mr. Tyrrel!’—said Henry.—‘You are for a ride, Will you take a fowling-piece? There ere pheasants over on the hills.’—

‘Oh, ho—master Henry—you are up! I am glad of it. I was just writing a word to say that business calls me away this morning. Is your father yet abed?’

‘He is sound asleep,’—said Henry,—‘I will wake him.’

‘No, my lad.—You must not do that. Say, I have received news this morning that has called me suddenly to my friends. I will return before long. Is your sister stirring?’—

‘She was in the garden but a moment since,’—replied Henry,—and the young man left the room, to which he returned after a short space.—‘Sister Mildred is engaged in her chamber, and begs you will excuse her,’—said he as he again entered the door.

‘Tush, Henry, I didn’t tell you to interrupt your sister.—Make her my most respectful adieu.—Don’t forget it.—I have all my way to win,’—he said to himself,—‘and a rough road to travel I fear.’—

Tyrrel now left the house and descended to the river, accompanied by Henry who sought in vain to know why he departed in such haste as not to stay for breakfast. James Curry waited below, and when Henry saw his father’s guest mount in his saddle and cross the ford, attended by his two servants, he turned about and clambered up the hill again, half singing and half saying to himself,—‘I’m glad he’s gone,—I’m glad he’s gone,’—accompanied with a trolling chorus, expressive of the satisfaction of his feelings at the moment.—‘He’d’a got a flea in his ear, if he had stay’d. I should like to know what major Butler would say to Mr. Tyrrel, if he was to meet him. Zooks! may be, Butler will see him this very morning at Mrs. Dimock’s!—Now, I wonder!—Shall I whisper that to sister Mildred? She would be glad for one, I’ll be bound! May be, they might have a fight.—And if they do, let Mr. Tyrrel look out! He never had his bread so buttered in his life, as it would be then.’—

In such a strain of cogitation and conjecture, Henry reached the parlour where he found Mildred. The melancholy that hung upon her spirits, the evening before,

seemed to have been dispelled by the repose of the night, and was doubtless relieved in part by the intelligence that Tyrrel had quitted the Dove Cote.

‘Come sister,’—said Henry, throwing his arm around her waist, and almost dancing, as he forced her through the open window,—‘come it will be a good while before father is ready for his breakfast:—let us go look at your flowers;—I have something to tell you.’

‘You are quite an important personage this morning,’—replied Mildred, moving off towards the lawn with her brother.—‘Your face looks as wise as a book of proverbs.’

It was sometime before the brother and sister returned to the parlour, and when they did so, their father had not yet appeared. The delay was unusual, for Lindsay generally rose at an early hour and frequently walked abroad before his morning meal. When he at last entered the room, there was an expression of care upon his brow and thought that made him haggard. Mildred, as was her custom, approached him with a kiss and, taking both of his hands, as she looked up in his face, she said with some earnestness—

‘You are not well, my dear father.’

Lindsay paused a moment while he gazed affectionately upon her, and then pressing her to his bosom uttered in a low voice, with a smile—

‘God bless my dear child!—How carefully does she read my looks!—Come hither Henry,’—he continued, as he gave his son one hand, and still held Mildred with the other, and then turned his eyes alternately upon each.—‘Now tell me,—which of you love me best? Who has waited most patiently for me this morning?—I see by that glance of your blue eye, master Henry, that you have been chiding your lazy father for lying so long abed. Now, I dare say, if the truth were known, you have had your rifle ready to go out and shoot squirrels an hour ago;—I beg your pardon Mr. Sportsman—not to shoot the squirrel, but to shoot at him. Or, perhaps you mean to bring us a deer to-day:—you know you have promised to do that every morning for a week.’

‘You shall eat a slice from as fine a saddle of venison

to-day, father, as you ever saw smoke over a chafing-dish.'—

'In good truth, shall I, boy? You are a brave promiser! You remember your own adage—Brag was a good dog, but Holdfast was a better.'

'In right down earnest, father, you shall.—You needn't laugh. Now you're thinking, I have the deer to shoot—there's your mistake: the saddle is this very minute lying on the dresser in the kitchen. He was a running buck yesterday—and I could tell where the powder and ball came from (here Henry made the motion of opening a hunting pouch at his side) that put an end to his capers.'

'He is a monstrous braggart,—is he not Mildred?'—said Lindsay directing a look of incredulity to his daughter.

'What Henry tells you is true,'—replied Mildred.—'Stephen Foster was here at sun rise with part of a buck, which he said was shot yesterday.'—

'Indeed! Then it is to Stephen's rifle we are indebted. You kill your bucks by proxy, master.'

'I'll bet,'—said Henry,—'that Stephen Foster hasn't the impudence to charge one penny for that venison. And why?—Because by the laws of chace one-half belongs to me.'

'Oh, I understand,'—interrupted Lindsay, with affected gravity,—'it is a matter of great doubt which of you shot it. You both fired at once,—or perhaps Stephen first, and you afterwards—and the poor animal dropped the moment you took your aim,—even before your piece went off. You know your aim, Henry, is deadly—much worse than your bullet.'

'There is no doubt who killed him,'—said Henry;—'for Stephen was on that side of the hill, and I was a little below him, and the buck ran right to Stephen, who, of course, gave him the first shot. But there was I, father, just ready, if Stephen had missed, to bring old Velvet-Horns to the ground, before he could have leaped a rod.'—

'But, unluckily, Stephen's first shot killed him?'—

'I don't know that,'—replied Henry,—'another person's knife might have done the business:—for the deer jumped down the bank into the road, and there'—

Mildred cast a sidelong look of caution at her brother, to warn him against alluding to a third person whom it was not discreet to mention.'—

'And there,'—said Henry, taking the sign,—'when I got up to him he was stone dead. I would almost think a deer couldn't be shot dead so suddenly.—But Stephen can pitch his lead—as he calls it—just where he likes.'

'Well,—it isn't fair to inquire who killed him,'—said Lindsay.—'One hunter often turns the game to the other's rifle. And, at all events, your dogs, Henry, I dare say did as much as either of you.'

'Hylas was just at his heels when he was shot,'—replied Henry,—'and a better dog there isn't in Amherst or Albemarle, to boot.'

'Well, well! Let us to breakfast. Where is our guest? Tyrrel is surely out before this.'

'He has been gone from the Dove Cote, more than an hour,'—said Henry.—'He told me to say, that some sudden news took him off in haste. I would have waked you, but he forbade it. His man Curry, who was waiting for him at the ford, I dare say brought him some despatches.'—

'It was very sudden,'—said Lindsay, musing:—'the great game will be shortly played.'

'My dear father, you have not your usual look of health,'—said Mildred again.—'I fear something disturbs you.'

'A slight cold only, from exposure to the night air, perhaps.—You did not see Tyrrel this morning, Mildred?'—

'I did not wish to see him, father.—I was up when he set out, but I was not in his way.'

'Fye, girl,—you almost speak crossly! Tyrrel, I must think, is not a man to win his way with ladies. But he is a loyal subject to his king. I can tell you, Mildred, loyalty is a virtue of good associations in these times.'

'It is the last virtue, my dear father, that a woman ever writes down in the list of noble qualities. We generally forget it altogether. History is so full of the glory of disloyal heroes, that the indiscriminate and persevering loyalty of brave men has come to be but little noticed. Brutus was disloyal, and so was Tell; and the English

barons of whom you boast so much, when you call them sturdy, were disloyal; and Washington,—who knows, my dear father, but that he may be written down by some future nation (and she laid an emphasis on this word) as another name to give credit to this word disloyal.'

'Thou art a shrewd orator, Mildred,'—exclaimed her father, as he sought to change the subject,—and I doubt not if heaven had made you a man you would now be flattering these rebels by persuading them they were all born for heroes. We may thank the gods that they have given you the petticoat instead of the soldier's cloak, and placed you at the head of a breakfast table instead of a regiment.'

'I do not think,'—replied Mildred smiling,—'that I should altogether disgrace the cloak now,—woman as I am—if the occasion required me to put it on.'

'Pray drop this subject, my dear child; you know it makes me sad. My family, I fear, are foredoomed to some strange mishap from these civil broils. Attend me presently in the library: I have matters to communicate that concern you.—Henry, my boy,'—Lindsay continued, as he rose from his breakfast,—'pay Stephen Foster the full value of the venison:—as a sportsman you have a right perhaps to your share of the game, but a gentleman shows his courtesy by waiving such claims,—he should suffer no friend to be his creditor, even in opinion. Stephen may not expect to be paid:—no matter,—it concerns your own character to be liberal.'

'I have promised Stephen a new rifle,'—replied Henry,—'since they have elected him lieutenant of the Amherst Rangers he wants something better than his old deer gun.'

'I positively forbid it,'—interrupted Lindsay hastily, and returning towards the middle of the room from the door through which he was about to depart.—'What!—would you purchase weapons for these clowns to enable them to shoot down his majesty's liege subjects?—to make war upon their rightful king, against his laws and throne?—to threaten your life, your sister's and mine, unless we bowed to this impious idol of democracy, which they have set up—this Washington!'

'My dear, dear father,'—interposed Mildred as she came up to him and flung her arms about his neck.—'Consider, Henry is a thoughtless boy, and does not look to consequences.'

'Heaven bless you both, my children! I beg your pardons.—I am over-captious.—Henry, pay Stephen for the venison, and give him something better than a rifle.—Mildred, I will see you presently.'

When Lindsay had left the parlour Mildred besought her brother, in the most earnest terms, to be more guarded against giving expression to any sentiment which might bring their father's thoughts to the existing war. Her own observation had informed her of the nature of the struggle that agitated his mind, and her effort was continually directed to calm and soothe his feelings by the most unrelenting affection, and thus to foster his resolution against taking any part in those schemes in which, she shrewdly guessed, it was the purpose of the emissaries of the royal party to involve him. By this course of conduct she hoped to keep him inactive until the struggle for independence was brought to a close, when she might with more reason expect to reconcile him to Arthur Butler.

In regard to her attachment to the republican officer, she dared not mention it to her father, whilst, at the same time, her self respect and her conviction of her duty to a parent who loved her with unbounded devotion, would not allow her altogether to conceal it. Upon this subject, however, Lindsay had sufficiently read her heart to know much more about it, than she chose to confess; and it did not fail to kindle up in his mind a feverish excitement, that occasionally broke forth in even a petulant reproof, and to furnish the only occasion that had ever arisen of serious displeasure against his daughter. The unhappy association between this incident in the life of Mildred, and the current of a feeling which had its foundation in a weak piece of superstition, to which I have alluded in a former chapter, gave to the idea of Mildred's marriage with Butler a fatal complexion in Lindsay's thoughts. 'For what purpose,' he asked himself—'but to avert this ill-omened event could I have had such an

ordinary warning?" It had occurred to him that the best method of protecting his family against this mischievous influence would be to throw Mildred into other associations, to encourage the growth of other attachments,—such might be expected to grow up in her heart out of the necessities of new friendships. He had even meditated sending her to England, but that plan became so repulsive to him when he found the mention of it distasteful to children, and it suited so little his own fondness for retirement he had already cultivated, that he had abandoned it almost as soon as it occurred to him. His alternative was to favour,—though he did so with no zeal—the proposal lately made by Tyrrel.—He knew the character of the woman he had to deal

Never was more devotion enshrined in a woman's heart than in Mildred's! Never was more fixed and unchangeable purpose to encounter all hazards and hold cheap pleasures more deeply rooted in man's or woman's nature, than was Mildred's to cherish the love and protect the fortunes of Arthur Butler!—

His conflict between love and filial duty sadly perverted the daughter's peace; and not less disturbing was the strife between parental affection and the supposed decree of fate, in the breast of the father.

Curry protested his sorrow for his recent indiscretion, promised more caution for the future; and then recur—o what more immediately concerned his sister's interest—he said—"I do much wonder what Tyrrel's man would say this morning!"—It took our good gentleman so suddenly. I can't help thinking it has something to do with Butler and Horse Shoe. They must have been seen by Curry, at Mrs. Dimock's, and that lipped old Caliban, Tony, knows the major very well and has told his name. Besides, do you know, I think Curry is a spy? Else, why would he be Mrs. Dimock's always? There was room enough for both of Mr. Tyrrel's servants.—I have a thought I will reconnoitre: I will ride over to the Blue Ball, and see what I can learn."

"My good brother,"—replied Mildred,—“and in the meantime I must to my father who has something disa-

greeable to tell me—so I fear—concerning that busy plotter who has just left us. My spirits grow heavy at the thought of it.—Ah, Henry—if I could but speak out, and unpack my heart, what a load would I throw off! How does it grieve me to have a secret that I dare not tell my dear father! Thank heaven, brother, your heart and mine have not yet had a secret that they could not whisper to each other!—

‘Give care the whip, sister,’—said Henry, like a young gallant;—‘it belongs to the bat family and should not fly in day time. Farewell for the next two hours!’—and saying these words the sprightly youth kissed his hand, and, with an alert step, left the room.

Mildred now retired to prepare for the interview with her father.

CHAPTER XI.

A SCENE BETWEEN A FATHER AND DAUGHTER.

WHEN Mildred entered the library Lindsay was already there. He stood before one of the ranges of book shelves, and held a volume in his hand which, for a moment after his daughter’s entrance, seemed to engross his attention. Mildred was sufficiently astute to perceive that by this device he struggled to compose his mind for an interview of which she more than guessed the import. She was of a constitution not easily to be driven from her self-possession; but the consciousness of her father’s embarrassment, and some perplexity in her own feelings at this moment, produced by a sense of the difficult part she had to perform, slightly decomposed her: there was something like alarm in her step, and also in the expression of her features, as she almost stealthily seated herself in one of the large lounging chairs. For a moment she unconsciously employed herself in stripping a little flower that she held in her hand of its leaves, and looked silently upon the floor;—at length, in a low accent, she said—‘Father, I am here at your bidding.’—Lindsay turned quickly round and, throwing down the

As he had been perusing, approached his daughter with a smile that seemed rather unnaturally to play over her grave and almost melancholy countenance; and it was a forced attempt at pleasantry he said, as he took her hand,—

Now, I dare say, you think you have done something wrong, and that I have brought you here to give a lecture?—

None, father, I have done nothing wrong,'—was Mildred's grave and almost tremulous reply.

You are a good child, Mildred,' said Lindsay, drawing her chair close beside her's—and then, in a more serious tone, he continued,—'you are entirely sure, my daughter, that I love you, and devoutly seek your happiness—'

—'Dear father, you frighten me by this solemn air.—Do not ask me such a question?—'

Do notardon me, my girl, but my feelings are full with subjects of serious import: and I would have you believe that I have now to say springs from an earnest solicitude for your welfare?—'

You have always shewn it, father?—'

Do come to speak to you without reserve of Tyrrel,'—said Lindsay;—'and you will not respond to my confidence, unless you answer me in the very truth of your heart.'

I have ever taught you, Mildred, to make me your bosom counsellor. Speak your thoughts freely on any topic I propose,—they cannot be committed to a more faithful guardian, my child.—This gentleman, Mr. Tyrrel, has twice avowed to me of late an earnest attachment to me, and has sought my leave to prosecute his suit. His feelings are not apt to escape a woman's notice, and I have doubtless had some hint of his predilection before he disclosed it to me?—'

—'The woman's bashfulness disappeared with this announcement. Mildred grew erect in her seat, and as the pride of her character beamed forth from every feature of her face, she replied—'

—'I have never, father, vouchsafed to give you such a hint of my good opinion. Mr. Tyrrel is content to let his bargain with you: he is well aware that what—'

ever hope he may be idle enough to cherish, must depend more on your command than on my regard.'

'He has never spoken to you, Mildred?'—asked Lindsay, without making any comment on the indignant reception his daughter had given to his disclosure.—'Never a word? Bethink you, my daughter, of all that has lately passed between you. A maiden is apt to misconstrue attentions. Can you remember nothing beyond the mere civilities of custom?'

'I can think of nothing in the conduct of Mr. Tyrrel but his devotion to the purpose of embroiling my dear father in his miserable politics. I can remember nothing of him but his low voice and noiseless step,—his mysterious insinuations,—his midnight sittings,—his fulsome flattery of your services in the royal cause,—the base means by which he has robbed you of your rest and taken the colour from your cheek. I thought him too busy in distracting your peace to cast a thought upon me. But to speak to me, father, of attachment,'—she said, rising and taking a station so near Lindsay's chair as to be able to lean her arm upon his shoulder,—'to breathe one word of a wish to win my esteem,—that he dared not do.'

'You speak under the impulse of some unnecessarily excited feeling, daughter.—You apply terms and impute motives that sound too harsh from your lips, when the subject of them is a brave and faithful gentleman. Mr. Tyrrel deserves nothing at our hands but kindness.'—

'Alas, my dear father, alas, that you should think so!'—

'What have you discovered, Mildred, or heard,—that you should deem so injuriously of this man? Who has conjured up this unreasonable aversion in your mind against him?'—

'I am indebted to no sources of information but my own senses,'—replied Mildred;—'I want no monitor to tell me that he is not to be trusted. He is not what he seems.'

'True, he is not what he seems,—but better. Tyrrel appears here but as a simple gentleman, wearing, for obvious reasons, an assumed name. The letters he has brought me avouch him to be a man of rank and family, high in the confidence of the officers of the king, and

holding a reputable commission in the army:—a man of note, worthy to be trusted with grave enterprises,—distinguished for sagacity, bravery and honour,—of moral virtues which 'would dignify any station,—and, as you cannot but acknowledge from your own observation, filled with the courtesy and grace of a gentleman. Fie, daughter!—it is sinful to derogate from the character of an honourable man.'

'Wearing an assumed name, father,—and acting a part, here,—at the Dove Cote!—Is it necessary for his purpose, that, under this roof, he should appear in masquerade?—May I know whether he treats with you for my hand in his real or assumed character,—does he permit me to know who he is?'—

'All in good time, Mildred.—Content you, girl, that he has sufficiently certified himself to me. There is no harm in masking when the parties unmask to the master of the house. These are perilous times, and Tyrrel is obliged to practise much address to find his way along our roads. You are aware it would not be discreet to have him known even to our servants. But the time will come when you shall know him as himself, and then, if I mistake not, your generous nature will be ashamed to have wronged him by unworthy suspicions.'—

'Believe me, father,'—exclaimed Mildred, rising to a tone of animation that awakened the natural eloquence of her feelings, and gave them vent in language which more resembled the display of a practised orator than the declamation of a girl,—'believe me, he imposes on you. His purposes are intensely selfish. If he has obtained an authority to treat with you or others under an assumed name, it has only been to further his personal ends. Already has he succeeded in plunging you, against your will, into the depth of this quarrel. Your time, my dear father, which once glided away as softly and as happily as yon sparkling waters through our valley, is now consumed in deliberations that wear out your spirits:—Your books are abandoned for the study of secret schemes of politics:—You are perplexed and anxious at every account that reaches us of victory or defeat.—It was not so, until you saw Tyrrel:—Your nights, that once knew

a long and healthful sleep, are now divided by short and unrefreshing slumbers:—You complain of unpleasant dreams, and you foretell some constantly coming disaster. Indeed, dearest father, you are not what you were. You wrong yourself by these cares, and you do not know how anxiously my brother Henry and myself watch, in secret, this unhappy change in your nature.—How can I think with patience of this Tyrrel when I see these things?”—

“The times, Mildred, leave me no choice. When a nation struggles to throw off the rule of lawful authority, the friends of peace and order should remember that the riotous passions of the refractory people are not to be subdued without personal sacrifices.”

“You promised yourself, father, here at the Dove Cote to live beyond the sphere of these excitements. And, as I well remember, you often, as the war raged, threw yourself upon your knees, and taught us,—your children,—to kneel by your side, and we put up our joint expressions of gratitude to God, that, at least, this little asylum was undisturbed by the angry passions of man.”

“We did,—we did,—my dearest child.—But I should think it sinful to pray for the same quiet when my services might be useful to restore harmony to a distracted and misguided country.”

“Do you now think,”—asked Mildred,—“that your efforts are or can be of any avail to produce peace?”—

“The blessing of Heaven has descended upon the arms of our sovereign,”—replied Lindsay.—“The southern provinces are subdued and are fast returning to their allegiance. The hopes of England brighten, and a speedy close of this unnatural rebellion is at hand.”

“There are many valleys, father, amongst these mountains, and the wide forests shade a solitude where large and populous nations may be hid almost from human search. They who possess the valleys and the wilderness, I have heard it said by wise men, will forever choose their own rulers.”—

“Mildred, you are a dutiful daughter, and are not wont to oppose your father’s wishes. I could desire to see you,—with that shrewd apprehension of yours,—that

quick insight, and that thoughtful mind,—thoughtful, beyond the quality of your sex,—less favourably bent towards the enterprise of these rebel subjects. I do utterly loath them and their cause, and could wish that child of mine abated in no one jot of my aversion to them.’—

‘Heaven, father, and your good tutoring have made me what I am,’—returned Mildred, calmly,—‘I am but a woman and speak with a weak judgment and little knowledge. To my unlearned mind it seems that the government of every nation should be what the people wish it. There are good men here, father, amongst your friends,—men who, I am sure, have all kindness in their hearts,—who say that this country has suffered grievous wrongs from the insolence of the king’s representatives. They have proclaimed this in a paper which I have heard even you say was temperate and thoughtful: and you know nearly the whole land has roused itself to say that paper was good. Can so many men be wrong?’—

‘You are a girl,’—replied Lindsay,—‘and a subtle one:—you are tainted with the common heresy.—But what else might I expect!—There are few *men* who can think out of fashion.—When the multitude is supposed to speak, that is warrant enough for the opinions of the majority. But it is no matter; this is not a woman’s theme and is foreign to our present conference.—I came to talk with you about Tyrrel.—Upon that subject I will use no persuasion, express no wish,—not in the slightest point essay to influence your choice. When he disclosed his purpose to me, I told him it was a question solely at your disposal. Thus much it is my duty to say,—that should his suit be favoured’—

‘From the bottom of my heart, father,’—interrupted Mildred eagerly and with increasing earnestness,—‘I abhor the thought. Be assured that if age, poverty and deformity were showered upon me at once,—if friends abandoned me,—if my reason were blighted, and I was doomed to wander barefooted amongst thorns and briars,—I would not exchange that lot, to be his wife amidst tenfold his honours and wealth. I never can listen to his hateful proposal:—there is that in my condition which

would make it wicked. Pray, dearest father, as you love your daughter, do not speak of it to me again.'

'Resume your calmness, child:—your earnestness on this subject afflicts me;—it has a fearful omen in it.—It tells of a heart fatally devoted to one whom, of all men, I have greatest reason to hate. This unhappy, lingering passion for the sworn enemy of his king and country, little becomes my daughter,—or her regard for me. It may rouse me, Mildred, to some unkind wish against thee.—Oh, I could curse myself that I ever threw you in the way of this insidious rebel, Butler.—Nay, you need not conceal your tears; well do they deserve to flow for this persevering transgression against the peace of your father's house. It requires but little skill to read the whole history of your heart.'—

Lindsay now walked to and fro across the apartment under the influence of emotions which he was afraid to trust himself to utter. At length resuming his expostulation, in a somewhat moderated tone, he continued—

'Will no lapse of time wear away this abhorred image from your memory?—Are you madly bent on bringing down misery on your head?—I do not speak of my own suffering.—Will you forever nurse a hopeless attachment for a man whom, it must be apparent to yourself, you can never meet again?—Whom, if the perils of the field, the avenging bullet of some loyal subject, do not bring him merited punishment,—the halter may reward, or, in his most fortunate destiny, disgrace, poverty and shame pursue:—Are you forever to love that man?'—

Mildred stood before her father as he brought this appeal to a close, her eyes filled with tears, her breast heaving as if it would burst; and, summoning up all her courage for her reply, when this last question was asked, she looked with an expression of almost angry defiance in his face as she answered—'Forever, forever,'—and hastily left the room.

The firm tone in which Mildred spoke these last words her proud and almost haughty bearing,—so unlike any thing Lindsay had ever seen before,—and her abrupt departure from his presence gave a check to the current of his thoughts that raised the most painful emotions. For

an instant a blush of resentment rose into his cheeks, and he felt tempted to call his daughter back that he might express this sentiment:—it was but of a moment's duration, however,—and grief, at what he felt was the first altercation he had ever had with his child, succeeded, and stifled all other emotions. He flung himself into the chair, and, dropping his forehead upon his hand, gave way to the full tide of his feelings. His spirits gradually became more composed, and he was able to survey with a somewhat temperate judgment the scene that had just passed. His manner, he thought, might have been too peremptory—perhaps it was harsh, and had offended his daughter's pride: he should have been more conciliatory in his speech.—‘The old,’—he said,—‘are not fit counselors to the young—we forget the warmth of their passions, and would reason when they only feel. How small a share has prudence in the concerns of the heart!’ But then this unexpected fervour of devotion to Butler,—that alarmed him, and he bit his lip, as he felt his anger rising with the thought.—‘Her repugnance to Tyrrel, her prompt rejection of his suit, her indignant contempt for the man, even—that I could bear with patience,’—he exclaimed.—‘I seek not to trammel her will by any authority of mine.—But this Butler!—Oh, there is the beginning of the curse upon my house!—there is the fate against which I have been so solemnly warned!—That man who has been the author of this unhappiness, and whose alliance with my name has been denounced by the awful visitation of the dead—that Mildred should cherish his regard, is misery.—It cannot and shall not be!’—

These and many such reflections passed through Lindsay's mind, and had roused his feelings to a tone of exacerbation against Arthur Butler, far surpassing any displeasure he had ever before indulged against this individual. In the height of this self-communion he was interrupted by the return of Mildred to the apartment, almost as abruptly as she had quitted it. She approached his chair, knelt, laid her head upon his lap, and wept aloud.

‘Why, my dear father,’—she said, at length, looking up in his face while the tears rolled down her cheeks,—

‘Why do you address language to me that makes me forget the duty I owe you? If you knew my heart you would spare and pity my feelings. Pardon me, dear father, if my conduct has offended you.—I knew not what I spoke—I am wretched, and cannot answer for my words. Do not think I would wound your affection by unkindness, but indeed,—indeed, I cannot hear you speak of Tyrrel without agony.’—

‘Rise daughter,’—said Lindsay, almost lifting her up,—‘I do not chide you for your repugnance to Tyrrel.—You mistake me if you think I would dictate to your affections:—my grief has a deeper source. This Arthur Butler’—

‘Spare that name, father!’—interrupted Mildred, retiring to a seat near the window and covering her face with her hands.

‘Curse him!’—exclaimed Lindsay.—‘May all the plagues that torment the human bosom fall upon him!—Mark me, daughter,—I trust I am not an unreasonable father—I know I am not an unkind one;—there are few requests that you could make which I would not freely grant. But to hear with patience the name of that man on your lips,—to think of him as allied to you by any sympathy,—as sharing any portion of your esteem—him, a rebel traitor who has raised his sacrilegious hand against his king—who has sold his name to infamy—who has contributed to fill these peaceful provinces with discord, and to subvert the happiness of this land, which heaven had appointed to be an asylum where man, disgusted with the lusts, rapine and murder of his fellow, might betake himself as a child to the bosom of his parent, — I cannot endure the thought of him! Never again, Mildred—I charge you,—never allude to him again!’—

‘If I could but tell you all!’—interrupted Mildred, sobbing—‘if I could but patiently have your hearing’—

‘Never a word of him!—as you desire to preserve my affection.—I will not hear.—Get to your chamber,’—said Lindsay almost sternly.—‘Get to your chamber,—this perverse and resolute temper of thine, needs the restraint of solitude.’

Mildred rose from her chair and moved towards the

door, and as she was about to depart she turned her weeping countenance towards her father—

‘Come hither,’—he said.—‘Thou art a foolish girl, and would bring down wretchedness and woe upon thee.—God forgive you!—from the bottom of my heart, I forgive you. This thing is not of your own imagining:—some malignant spirit has spread his baleful wing above our house. Go, child,—forget what has been said,—and believe that your father buffets thus harshly with fate for your own welfare. Kiss me—and may heaven shield you against this impending ill!’—

‘Dear father,—hear me,’—said Mildred, as Lindsay imprinted a kiss upon her forehead—

‘Away, away!’—interrupted Lindsay,—‘I would be temperate,—nor again forget myself.—In all love, Mildred, away.’—

Mildred left the room, and Lindsay, to restore the equanimity of his temper which had been so much overthrown by this interview, wandered forth into the valley, whence it was some hours before he returned.

It was not long after the termination of this conference before Henry rode up to the door. The clatter of his horse’s hoofs brought Mildred from her chamber into the parlour.

‘What! sister, your eyes red with tears?’—said Henry. ‘Who has distressed you?’

‘Ah, brother, I have had a weary time in your absence. Our poor father is sadly displeased with me.’

‘Have you told him all?’—asked Henry, with an expression of anxiety.—

‘He bade me,’—replied Mildred,—‘never mention Arthur’s name again. He would not hear me speak of Arthur. Have I not reason, dear brother, to be miserable?’—

‘I love you Mildred,’—said Henry, kissing his sister,—‘and what’s more, I love Arthur Butler—and will stand up for him against the world. And I have a good mind to go to my father and tell him I am man enough to think for myself—and more than that—that I, for one, believe these rebels, as he calls them, have the right of it. Why shouldn’t I?—Can’t I shoot a rifle as well as the best of

them?—and stand by a friend in a quarrel, and make good my words as well as many a man who writes thirty to his age? Tush!—I am tired of this boy-play—shooting with blunted arrows, and riding with my father's hand ever on the neck of my horse, as if I could not hold the reins. Give me sharp steel, Mildred, and throw me on the world, and I'll be bound I make my way as well as another.'—

'We are surrounded with difficulties, brother,'—said Mildred,—‘and have a hard part to perform. We must soothe our dear father's feelings—for he loves us, Henry;—and if he could but think as we do—how happy should we be! But there is something fearful in his passions, and it makes me tremble to see them roused’

'This all comes,'—replied Henry,—‘from that devil's imp Tyrrel. Oh, I could find it in my heart to trounce that fellow, sister.—But you hav'n't asked me about my reconnoitring!—I'll tell you.—Tyrrel's man, Curry, talked a great deal to old Tony and Mrs. Dimock both, about our friends who went there last night,—and found out their names and all about them: and there was some fray between Horse Shoe and Curry, in which, I'll warrant you, Horse Shoe gave him a drubbing;—so Tony told me.—Well, Butler and Horse Shoe set out this morning at day light. And Tyrrel went over there to breakfast:—and you may suppose he was lucky in not meeting the major,—for I am sure there would have been a spot of work if he had. Furthermore, I found out that Tyrrel followed on the same road after Butler—so they may meet yet, you know.'—

'I pray not,'—said Mildred

'Why pray not, sister?—I pray they may meet.—Let Tyrrel have all the good of it!—There,—now I believe I have given you all the news, sister, exactly as I picked it up.—But here is a trifle I forgot,'—said Henry, producing a letter addressed to Mildred. ‘Ah, ha, you brighten up now! This was left by the major with Mrs. Dimock, to be forwarded to you with care and speed.'—

Mildred tore open the letter and eagerly perused its contents. They consisted of a few lines hastily penned by Butler, at early dawn, as he was about mounting his

horse for the prosecution of his journey.—Their purpose was to apprise her of the discovery Robinson had made of the true character of Curry, and also to express his fears that this latter person might disclose to Tyrrel the fact of his, Butler's, visit. He cautioned her to observe the conduct of Tyrrel, and to communicate with him at Gates' head quarters where he expected to be delayed a few days on his journey: her letter, he said, might be forwarded by some of the parties who at that time were continually passing southward: Henry might look to this;—and he concluded by assuring her that he would write as often as he might find means of conveying a packet to the care of good Mistress Dimock, who was sufficiently in the interest of the lovers to keep faithfully any secret which they might confide to her.

This letter served to explain the cause of Tyrrel's sudden departure, and to confirm Mildred in the opinion, which she had before expressed, that this guest of her father was not ignorant of the interest Butler had in her regard. Her determination therefore was to watch his motions narrowly, and to make her lover acquainted with whatever she might discover.

'It is even so,'—she said musing—'Tyrrel either fears or hates Arthur. I shudder to think that that man should have any motive supplied him to contrive against the peace or safety of one so dear to me.—Wretch,'—she exclaimed,—'that he should be insolent enough to hope for my regard!—Oh! my father, my father, what a snare has been spread for you by this man!—Thank you, brother,' she continued, addressing Henry.—'You have well executed your mission.—Be discreet and ready:—I shall have much need of your head and hand both:—your heart is mine already, good brother.'

'I will ride for you, sister,'—said Henry,—'I will run for you, speak for you, pray for you—if my prayers be worth any thing—and strike for you, if need be.—If I am but turned of sixteen, I am a man, I trow!—and that's more than you are.—Good bye!—a soldier ought to look after his horse, you know.'

'God bless you, dear brother, for an excellent boy'—

said Mildred smiling,—‘man I mean—aye and a brave one!’

Henry now walked away, and Mildred betook herself to other cares.

CHAPTER XII.

A POLITICAL RETROSPECT.—BUTLER ENTERS SOUTH CAROLINA.

It was the misfortune of South Carolina, during the revolutionary war, to possess a numerous party less attached to the union and more tainted with disaffection to the confederated government than the inhabitants of any of the other states. Amongst her citizens the disinclination to sever from the mother country was stronger, the spread of republican principles more limited, and the march of revolution slower, than in either of the other colonies, except, perhaps, in the neighbour state of Georgia, where the people residing along the Savannah river, were so closely allied to the Carolinians in sentiment, habits and pursuits as to partake pretty accurately of the same political prejudices, and to unite themselves in parties of the same complexion. Upon the first invasion of Georgia, at the close of the year 1778, the city of Savannah was made an easy conquest, and a mere handful of men, early in 1779, were enabled to penetrate the interior as far as Augusta, and to seize upon that post. The audacity with which Prevost threatened Charleston in the same year, the facility of his march through South Carolina, and the safety which attended his retreat, told a sad tale of the supineness of the people of that province. The reduction of Charleston in the following year, by Sir Henry Clinton, was followed with singular rapidity by the conquest of the whole province. A civil government was erected. The most remote posts in the mountains were at once occupied by British soldiers or provincial troops, mustered under the officers of the royal army.—Proclamations were issued to call back the wandering sheep to the royal fold,—and they, accordingly,

like herds that had been scattered from beneath the eye of the shepherd by some rough incursion of wolves, flocked in as soon as they were aware of the retreat of their enemy. Lord Cornwallis, upon whom the command devolved after the return of Sir Henry Clinton in June to New York, recruited his army from these repentant or unwilling republicans; and the people rejoiced at what they thought the end of strife and the establishment of law. The auxiliaries who had marched from Virginia and North Carolina under colonel Buford, to assist in the defence of the southern capital, were informed of its surrender as they journeyed thither, and soon found themselves obliged to fly through a country they had come to succour;—and when even at the distance of one hundred and fifty miles from the city, were overtaken by the ruthless troopers of Tarleton, and butchered under circumstances peculiarly deplorable.

In truth, a large proportion of the population of South Carolina seem to have regarded the revolution with disfavour, and they were slow to break their ancient friendship for the land of their forefathers. The colonial government was mild and beneficent in its action upon the province, and the people had a reverence for the mother country deeper and more affectionate than was found elsewhere. They did not resent, because, haply, they did not feel the innovations of right asserted by the British crown, so acutely as some of their neighbours; to them it did not seem to be so unreasonable that taxation should be divorced from representation. They did not quarrel with the assumption of Great Britain to regulate their trade for them in such manner as best suited her own views of interest; nor did they see in mere commercial restrictions the justification of civil war and hot rebellion;—because, peradventure, (if I may hazard a reason) being a colony of planters whose products were much in demand in England, neither the regulations of their trade nor the restrictions upon commerce, were likely to be so adjusted as to interfere with the profitable expansion of their labours.

Such might be said to be the more popular sentiment of the state at the time of its subjugation by Sir Henry

Clinton and Lord Cornwallis. To this common feeling there were many brilliant exceptions;—and the more brilliant because they stood, as it were, apart from the preponderating mass of public judgment. There is no trial of courage which will bear comparison with that of a man whose own opinions stand in opposition, upon fearful questions of passion, to those of the ‘giddy-paced’ and excited multitude,—and who, nevertheless, carries them ‘into act.’ That man who can stand in the breach of universal public censure, with all the fashions of opinion disgracing him in the thoughts of the lookers-on,—with the tide of obloquy beating against his breast, and the fingers of the mighty, combined many pointing him to scorn;—nay, with the fury of the drunken rabble threatening him with instant death,—and, worse than all, having no present friend to whisper a word of defence or palliative, in his behalf, to his revilers,—but bravely giving his naked head to the storm, because he knows himself to be virtuous in his purpose;—that man shall come forth from this fierce ordeal like tried gold; philosophy shall embalm his name in her richest unction, history shall give him a place on her brightest page, and old, yea, hoary, far-off posterity shall remember him as of yesterday.

There were heroes of this mould in South Carolina, who entered with the best spirit of chivalry into the national quarrel, and brought to it hearts as bold, minds as vigorous, and arms as strong as ever, in any clime, worked out a nation’s redemption. These men refused submission to their conquerors and endured exile, chains and prisons rather than the yoke. Some few, still undiscouraged by the portents of the times, retreated into secret places, gathered their few patriot neighbours together, and contrived to keep in awe the soldier-government that now professed to sway the land. They lived on the scant aliment furnished in the woods, slept in the tangled brakes and secret places of the fen, exacted contributions from the adherents of the crown, and by rapid movements of their woodland cavalry and brave blows, accomplished more than thrice their numbers would have achieved in ordinary warfare.

The disaffected abounded in the upper country, and here Cornwallis maintained some strong garrisons. The difficulties that surrounded the republican leaders may well be supposed to have been appalling in this region, where regular posts had been established to furnish the Tories secure points of union, and the certainty of prompt assistance whenever required. Yet notwithstanding the numerical inferiority of the friends of independence, their guarded and proscribed condition, their want of support, and their almost absolute destitution of all the necessaries of military life, the nation was often rejoiced to hear of brilliant passages of arms where, however unimportant the consequences, the display of soldiership and bravery was of the highest order. In such encounters, or frays,—they might almost be called, from the smallness of the numbers concerned and the hand-to-hand mode of fighting which they exhibited,—Marion, Sumpter, Horry, Pickens and many others had won a fame that in a nation of poetical or legendary associations would have been reduplicated through a thousand channels of immortal verse: but, alas!—we have no ballads:—and many men, who as well deserve to be remembered as Percy or Douglas, as Adam Bell or Clym of the Clough, have sunk down without even a couplet-epitaph upon the rude stone, that in some unfenced and unreverenced grave-yard, still marks the lap of earth whereon their heads were laid.

One feature that belonged to this unhappy state of things in Carolina was the division of families. Kindred were arrayed against each other in deadly feuds, and, not unfrequently, brother took up arms against brother, and sons against their sires. A prevailing spirit of treachery and distrust marked the times. Strangers did not know how far they might trust to the rites of hospitality, and many a man laid his head upon his pillow, uncertain whether his fellow lodger, or he with whom he had broken bread at his last meal, might not invade him in the secret watches of the night and murder him in his slumbers. All went armed, and many slept with pistols or daggers under their pillows. There are tales told of men being summoned to their doors or windows at midnight

by the blaze of their farm yards to which the incendiary torch had been applied, and shot down, in the light of the conflagration, by a concealed hand. Families were obliged to betake themselves to the shelter of the thickets and swamps, when their own homesteads were dangerous places. The enemy wore no colours, and was not to be distinguished from friends either by outward guise or speech:—nothing could be more revolting than to see the symbols of peace thus misleading the confident into the toils of war; nor is it possible to imagine a state of society characterized by a more frightful insecurity.

Such was the condition of the country to which my tale now makes it necessary to introduce my reader. Butler's instructions required that he should report himself to general Gates, and, unless detained for more pressing duty, to proceed with all the circumspection which the enterprise might require, to colonel Clarke who, it was known, was at that time in the upland country of South Carolina, raising troops to act against Augusta and other British posts. He accordingly arrived at head quarters, on the borders of the two Carolinas, in about a week after leaving the Dove Cote. The army of the brave and unfortunate De Kalb, which had been originally destined for the relief of Charleston, had been increased, by reinforcements of militia from Virginia and the adjoining states, to double the computed strength of the British forces; and Gates, on taking the command of it, was filled with the most lofty presentiments of victory. Vain glorious and unadvisable, he is said to have pushed forward with an indiscreet haste, and to have thrown himself into difficulties which a wiser man would have avoided. He professed himself to stand in no need of recruits to his army, and Butler, therefore, after the delay of a few days, was left at liberty to pursue his original scheme.

The wide spread disaffection of the region through which our adventurers were about to pass, inculcated the necessity of the utmost vigilance to avoid molestation from the numerous parties that were then abroad hastening to the seat of war. Under the almost entire guidance of Robinson, who was familiar with every path in this

neighbourhood, Butler's plan was to temporize with whatever difficulties might beset his way, and to rely upon his own and his comrade's address for escape.

The sergeant's first object was to conduct his superior to his own dwelling, which was situated on the Catawba, a short distance above the Waxhaws. This was safely accomplished on the second day after they had left Gates. A short delay at this place enabled Butler to exchange the dress he had hitherto worn, for one of a more homely and rustic character,—a measure deemed necessary to facilitate his quiet passage through the country. With these precautions he and the trusty sergeant resumed their expedition, and now shaped their course across the region lying between the Catawba and Broad rivers, with the intention of reaching the habitation of Wat Adair, a well-known woodsman who lived on the southern side of the latter river, somewhat above its confluence with the Pacolet. The route they had chosen for this purpose consisted of such circuitous and unfrequented paths as were least likely to be infested by the scouts of the enemy or by questioners who might be too curious regarding the object of their journey.

The second week of August had half elapsed when, towards the evening of a day that had been distinguished for the exhilarating freshness of the atmosphere,—such as is peculiar to the highlands of southern latitudes at this season,—our travellers found themselves descending through a long and shady defile to the level ground that lay along the margin of the Broad river. The greater part of the day had been spent in threading the mazes of a series of sharp and abrupt hills covered with the native forest, or winding through narrow valleys amongst tangled thickets of briars and copsewood, by a path scarce wide enough to permit the passage of a single horse. They had now emerged from the wilderness upon a public highway, which extended across the strip of lowland that skirted the river. The proximity of the river itself was indicated by the nature of the ground, that here retained vestiges of occasional inundations, as also by the rank character of the vegetation. The road led through a swamp which was rendered passable by a causeway of

timber, and was shaded on either side by a mass of shrubbery composed of laurel, magnolia and such other plants as delight in a moist soil, over whose forms a tissue of creeping plants was woven in such profusion as to form a fastness or impregnable retreat for all kinds of noxious animals. Above this wilderness, here and there, might be seen in the depths of the morass the robust cypress or the lurid pine high enough for the mast of the largest ship, the ash and gum,—and, towering above all, the majestic poplar with its branchless trunk bound up in the embraces of a huge serpent-like grapevine.

As soon as Butler found himself extricated from the difficult path that had so much embarrassed his journey, and once more introduced upon a road that allowed him to ride abreast with his companion, he could not help congratulating himself upon the change:

‘Well, here at last, Galbraith,’—he said,—‘is an end to this bridle path, as you call it. Thank heaven for it! The settlement of the account between this and the plain road would not leave much in our favour:—on one side, I should have to set down my being twice unhorsed in riding up perpendicular hills;—one plunge up to the belly in the mud of a swamp,—a dozen times in danger of strangling from grapevines,—and how often torn by briars I leave you to reckon up by looking at my clothes. And all this is to be cast up against the chance of meeting a few rascally Tories.—Faith! upon the whole, it would have been as cheap to fight.’

‘Whist, Major,—you are a young man and don’t study things as I do.—You never catch me without reason on my side. As to standing upon the trifle of a man or two odds in the way of a fight, when there was need of scratching, I wouldn’t be so onaccommodating as to ask you to do that. But I had some generalship in view, which I can make appear. This road, which we have just got into, comes up through Winnsborough, which is one of the randyvoos of the Tories: now I thought if we outflanked them by coming through the hills, we mought keep our heads out of a hornet’s nest. The best way, major Butler, to get along through this world is not be quarrelsome,—that’s my principle.’—

'Truly, it comes well from you, sergeant, who within two days past have been in danger of getting your crown cracked at least six times! Were you not yesterday going to beat a man only for asking a harmless question?—A rough fellow to-boot, Horse Shoe, who might, from appearance, have turned out a troublesome customer.'

'Ho, ho, ho, major!—Do you know who that character was?—That was mad Archy Gibbs from the Broken Bridge,—one of the craziest devils after a fracaw on Cawba,—a tearing Tory likewise.'

'And was that an argument for wishing to fight him?'

'Why you see, major, I've got a principle on that subject. It's an observation I have made, that whenever you come across one of these rampagious fellows, that's always for breeding disturbances, the best way is to be as fractious as themselves. You have hearn of the way of putting out a house on fire by blowing it up with gun powder?'

'A pretty effectual method, sergeant.'

'Dog wont eat dog,'—continued Horse Shoe.—'Ho, ho!—I know these characters,—so I always bullies them. When we stopped yesterday at the surveyor's, on Blair's Range, to get a little something to eat, and that bevy of Tories came riding up, with mad Archy at their head, a thought struck me that the fellows mought be dogging us, and that sot me to thinking what answer I should make consarning you, if they were to question me.—So, ecod, I made a parson of you, ha, ha, ha!—Sure enough, they began as soon as they sot down in the porch to axing me about my business, and then about yourn.—I told them, correspondent and accordingly, that you was a presbyterian minister, and that I had undertook to show you the road to Chester, were you was going to hold forth. And, thereupon, mad Archy out with one of his tremengious oaths, and swore he would have a sarmint from you, for the good of his blackguards, before they broke up.'

'Mad Archy and his blackguards would have profited no doubt by my spiritual lessons.'

'Rather than let him have any thing to say to you,'—proceeded Robinson,—'for you wa'n't prepared,—seeing

that you didn't hear what was going on,—though I spoke loud enough, on purpose, major, for you to hear us through the window—I up and told Archy—says I, I am a peaceable man, but I'll be d—d if any minister of the gospel shall be insulted whilst I have the care of him;—and, furthermore, says I—I didn't come here to interrupt no man;—but if you, Archy Gibbs, or any one of your crew says one ondecient word to the parson, they'll run the risk of being flung sprawling on this here floor—and that's as good as if I had sworn to it—and as for you, Archy, I'll hold you accountable for the good conduct of your whole squad.—But, major, you are about the hardest man to take a wink I ever knowed.—There was I a motioning of you and signifying to get your horse and be off, at least ten minutes before you took the hint.'—

'I was near spoiling all, Galbraith; for from your familiarity with these fellows I, at first, thought them friends.'

'They were mighty dubious, you may depend. And it was as much as I could do to keep them from breaking in on you. They said it was strange—and so it was—to see a parson riding with pistols; but I told them you was obliged to travel so much after night that it was as much as you could do to keep clear of panthers and wolves;—and in fact, major, I had to tell them a monstrous sight of lies, just to keep them in talk whilst you was getting away: it was like a rare guard scrummaging by platoons on a retreat to let the advance off.—I was monstrous afeard, major, you wouldn't saddle my horse.'—

'I understood you at last, Galbraith, and made every thing ready for a masterly retreat, and then moved away with a very sober air, leaving you to bring up the rear like a good soldier. And you know, sergeant, I didn't go so far but that I was at hand to give you support if you had stood in need of it. I wonder now that they let you off so easily.'

'They didn't want to have no uproar with me, major Butler. They knowed me—that although I wa'n't a quarrelsome man they would'a got some of their necks twisted if I had seen occasion:—in particular, I would have taken some of Mad Archy's crazy fits out of him—

by my hand, I would, major! But I'll tell you,—I made one observation, that this here sort of carrying false colours goes against a man's conscience:—it doesn't seem natural for a man, that's accustomed and willing to stand by his words, to be heaping one lie upon top of another as fast as he can speak them. It really, major Butler, does go against my grain.'

'That point of conscience,'—said Butler laughing,—'has been duly considered—and, I believe, we are safe in setting it down as entirely lawful to use any deceit of speech to escape from an enemy in time of war. We have a dangerous trade, sergeant, and the moralists indulge us more than they do others:—and as I am a minister, you know, you need not be afraid to trust your conscience to my keeping.'

'They allow that all's fair in war, I believe. But it don't signify—a man is a good while before he gets used to this flat lying,—for I can't call it by no other name.'

'If we should be challenged on this road, before we reach Wat Adair's,'—said Butler,—'it is your opinion that we should say we are graziers going to the mountains to buy cattle.'

'That's about the best answer I can think of. Though you must be a little careful about that. If you see me put my hand up to my mouth and give a sort of hem, major, then leave the answer to me. A gang of raw lads might be easily imposed upon, but it wouldn't do if there's an old sodger amongst them—he mought ax some hard questions.'

'I know but little of this grazier craft to bear an examination. I fear I should fare badly if one of these bullies should take it into his head to cross question me.'

'If a man takes on too much with you,'—replied Robinson,—'it is well to be a little saucy to him. If he thinks you are for a quarrel, the chances are he won't pester you. But if any of these Tories should only take it into their heads—without our telling them right down in so many words—for I would rather a lie, if it is to come out, should take a roundabout way—that we are sent up here by Cornwallis, or Rawdon, or Leslie, or any of their people to do an arrand, they will be as civil, sir,

as your grandmother's cat,—for, major, they are a blasted set of cringing whelps,—the best of them—and will take any thing that has G. R. marked on it with thanks,—even if it was a cat-o-nine tails, which they deserve every day at roll call—the sorry devils!’—

‘I am completely at my wit's end, Galbraith. I have not done much justice to your appointment of me as a parson,—and when I come to play the grazier it will be still worse; even in this disguise of a plain countryman I make a poor performer;—I fear I shall disgrace the boards.’

‘If the worst comes to the worst, major, the rule is run or fight. We can manage that, at any rate,—for we have had a good deal of both in the last three or four years.’

‘God knows we have had practice enough, sergeant, to make us perfect in that trick. Let us make our way through this treacherous ground as quickly and as quietly as we can. Get me to Clarke by the shortest route, and keep as much among friends as you know how.’

‘As to that, major Butler, it is all a matter of chance,—for, to tell you plain truth, I don't know who to depend upon. A quick eye, a nimble foot and a ready hand will be our surest friends. Then with the pistols at your saddle, besides a pair in your pocket, and a dirk for close quarters, and my rifle here for a long shot, major, I am not much doubtful but what we shall hold our own.’

‘How far are we from Adair's?’—asked Butler.

‘Not more than a mile,’—replied Horse Shoe.—‘You may see the ferry just ahead. Wat lives upon the top of the first hill on the other side.’

‘Is that fellow to be trusted, sergeant?’

‘Better with the help of gold, major, than without it. Wat was never over honest. But it is worth our while to make a friend of him if we can.’

Our travellers had now reached the river, which was here a smooth and deep-stream, though by no means so broad as to entitle it to the distinction by which, in its lower portion, it has earned its name. It here flowed sluggishly along in deep and melancholy shade.

Butler and his companion were destined to encounter a difficulty at this spot which to less hardy travellers

would have been deemed a serious embarrassment. The boat was not to be seen on either side of the river, having been carried off a few hours before,—according to the information given by the inmates of a negro cabin, constituting the family of the ferryman,—by a party of soldiers.—

Robinson regarded this obstacle with the resignation of a practised philosopher. He nodded his head significantly to his companion upon receiving the intelligence, as he said,

‘There is some mischief in the wind. These Tories are always dodging about in gangs; and when they collect the boats on the river, it is either to help them forward on some house burning and thieving business, or to secure their retreat when they expect to have honest men at their heels. It would be good news to hear that Sumpter was near their cruppers—which, by the by, is not unlikely neither.—You would be told of some pretty sport then, major.’—

‘Sumpter’s means, sergeant,’—replied Butler,—‘I fear are not equal to his will.—There are heavy odds against him, and it isn’t often that he can venture from his hiding place. But what are we to do now, Galbraith?’

‘Ha, ha,—do as we have often done before this—launch our four-legged ships, and take a wet jacket coolly and dispassionately—as that quare devil lieutenant Hopkins used to tell us when he was going to make a charge of the bagnet. We hav’n’t no time to lose, major,—and if we had, I don’t think the river would run dry.—So, here goes.’—

With these words Robinson plunged into the stream, and, with his rifle resting across his shoulder, he plied his voyage towards the opposite bank with the same unconcern as if he journeyed on dry land. As soon as he was fairly afloat he looked back to give a few cautions to Butler.—

‘Head slantwise up stream, major,—lean a little forward, so as to sink your horse’s nose nearer to the water—he swims all the better for it. Slacken your reins and give him play.—You have it now. It isn’t uncomfortable in a day’s ride to get a cool seat once in a while.

Here we are safe and sound,'—he continued as they reached the further margin,—'and nothing the worse for the ferrying, excepting it be a trifle of dampness about the breeches.'

The two companions now galloped towards the higher grounds of the adjacent country.

By the time that they had gained the summit of a long hill that rose immediately from the plain of the river, Robinson apprized Butler that they were now in the vicinity of Adair's dwelling. The sun had sunk below the horizon, and the varied lustre of early twilight tinged the surrounding scenery with its own beautiful colours. The road, as it wound upward, gradually emerged from the forest upon a tract of open country, giving signs of one of those original settlements which, at that day, were sparsely sprinkled through the great wilderness. The space that had been snatched from the ruggedness of nature, for the purposes of husbandry, comprehended some three or four fields of thinly cultivated land. These were yet spotted over with stumps of trees, that seemed to leave but little freedom to the course of the ploughshare, and bespoke a thriftless and slovenly tillage. A piece of half cleared ground, occupying the side of one of the adjacent hills, presented to the eye of our travellers a yet more uncouth spectacle. This spot was still clothed with the native trees of the forest, all of which had been death-stricken by the axe, and now heaved up their withered and sapless branches towards the heavens, without leaf or spray. In the phrase of the woodman, they had been *girdled* some years before, and were destined to await the slow decay of time in their upright attitude. It was a grove of huge skeletons that had already been bleached into an ashy hue by the sun, and whose stiff and dry members rattled in the breeze with a preternatural harshness. Amongst the most hoary of these victims of the axe, the gales of winter had done their work and thrown them to the earth, where the shattered boles and boughs lay as they had fallen, and were slowly reverting into their original dust. Others, whose appointed time had not yet been fulfilled, gave evidence of their struggle with the frequent storm, by

their declination from the perpendicular line. Some had been caught in falling, by the boughs of a sturdier neighbour, and still leaned their huge bulks upon these supports,—awakening the mind of the spectator to the fancy that they had sunk in some deadly paroxysm into charitable and friendly arms and, thus locked together, abided their tardy but irrevocable doom. It was a field of the dead; and the more striking in its imagery from the contrast which it furnished to the rich, verdurous and lively forest that, with all the joyousness of health, encompassed this blighted spot. Its aspect was one of unpleasant desolation; and the traveller of the present day who visit our western wilds, where this slovenly practice is still in use, will never pass through such a precinct without a sense of disgust at the disfiguration of the landscape.

The field thus marred might have contained some fifty acres, and it was now occupied, in the intervals between the lifeless trunks, with a feeble crop of Indian corn, whose husky and parched blades, as they fluttered in the evening wind, added new and appropriate features to the inexpressible raggedness of the scene. The same effect was further aided and preserved by the cumbrous and unseemly worm fence that shot forth its stiff angles around the tract.

On the very apex of the hill up which our travellers were now clambering, was an enclosure of some three or four acres of land, in the middle of which, under the shade of a tuft of trees, stood a group of log cabins so situated as to command a view of nearly every part of the farm. The principal structure was supplied with a rude porch that covered three of its sides, whilst the smoke that curled upwards from a wide-mouthed chimney, and the accompaniment of a bevy of little negroes, that were seen scattered amongst the out-houses, gave an air of habitation and life to the place that contrasted well with the stillness of the neighbouring wood. A well-beaten path led into a narrow ravine where might be discerned, peeping forth from the weeds, the roof of a spring house; and, in the same neighbourhood, a rough garden was observable, in which a bed of broad-leaved cabbages seemed to have their ground disputed by a plentiful crop of bur-

dock, thistles and other intruders upon a manured soil.—In this enclosure, also, the holly hock and sun flower,—rival cockscombs of the vegetable community—gave their broad and garish tribute to the beautifying of the spot.

The road approached within some fifty paces of the front of the cabins, where access was allowed, not by the help of a gate, but only by a kind of ladder or stile formed of rails which were so arranged as to furnish steps across the barrier of the worm fence at four or five feet from the ground.

‘Are you sure of entertainment here, Galbraith?’ inquired Butler as they halted at the stile.—‘This Wat Adair is not likely to be churlish, I hope.’

‘I dont think I am in much humour to be turned away,’—replied Robinson.—‘It’s my opinion that a man who has rode a whole day has a sort of right to quarters wherever the night finds him—providing he pays for what he gets.—But I have no doubt of Wat, major.—Holloa! who’s at home?—Wat Adair! Wat Adair!—Travellers, man!—Show yourself.’

‘Who are you that keep such a racket at the fence there?’—demanded a female voice.—‘What do you mean by such doings before a peaceable house?’—

‘Keep your dogs silent, ma’am,’—returned Horse Shoe, in a blunt and loud key,—‘and you will hear us. If you are Wat Adair’s wife you are as good as master of this house. We want a night’s lodging and must have it—and besides we have excellent stomachs, and mean to pay for all we get. Ain’t that reason enough to satisfy a sensible woman, Mrs. Adair?’

‘If you come to make disturbance,’—said a man of a short and sturdy figure, who, at this moment stepped out from the house and took a position in front of it, with a rifle in his hand—‘if you come here to insult a quiet family you had best turn your horses’ heads up the road and jog further.’

‘We might do that sir, and fare worse.’—said Butler in a conciliatory tone.—‘You have no need of your gun: we are harmless travellers who have come a long way to get under your roof.’

‘Where from?’ asked the other.

‘From below,’—said Horse Shoe promptly.

‘What side do you take?’

‘Your side for to-night,’ returned Robinson again. ‘Dont be obstropolous friend,’ he continued, at the same time dismounting—‘we have come on purpose to pay Wat a visit, and if you ha’n’t got no brawlers in the house, you needn’t be afraid of us.’

By this time the sergeant had crossed the stile and approached the questioner, to whom he offered his hand. The man gazed for a moment upon his visiter, and then asked—

‘Isn’t this Galbraith Robinson?’

‘They call me so,’—replied Horse Shoe,—‘and if I ain’t mistaken, this is Michael Lynch. You wan’t going to shoot at us, Michael?’

‘A man must have sharp eyes when he looks in the face of a neighbour now-a-days,’—said the other. ‘Come in,—Wat’s wife will be glad to see you. Wat himself will be home presently. Who have you here, Galbraith?’

‘This is Mr. Butler,’—answered Horse Shoe, as the major joined them.—‘He and me are taking a ride across into Georgia—and we thought we would give Wat a call, just to hear the news.’

‘You are apt to fetch more news than you will take away,’ replied the other,—‘but there is a good deal doing now in all quarters. Howsever, go into the house,—we must give you something to eat and a bed besides.’

After putting their horses in charge of a negro who now approached in the character of an ostler, our adventurers followed Michael Lynch into the house.

CHAPTER XIII.

A WOODMAN’S FAMILY.

THE apartment into which the travellers were introduced was one of large dimensions, conspicuous for its huge kitchen-like fireplace and ample chimney. The floor, consisting of broad planks, was so much warped

as, in several places, to show the ground through the chinks. The furniture was of the rudest form and most homely materials. Three or four rifles were suspended against the walls, together with some trapping implements and various skins of such wild animals of prey and game as abounded in the woods of this region: these were associated with the antlers of the buck, powder-horns, hunting pouches, and a few articles of clothing,—the whole array giving to the room that air of woodland life which denotes the habitation of a hunter, and which so distinctly characterizes the dwellings of our frontier population.

Amongst other articles of household use was a large spinning wheel that was placed near the door, and beside it stood the dame who had first challenged the visitors. She was a woman who could scarcely be said to have reached the middle period of life, although her wan and somewhat haggard features, and a surly, discontented expression of face might well induce an observer to attribute more years to her worldly account than she had actually seen. The presence of a rough and untidy cradle and some five or six children, the majority of whom might be below three feet in stature, served in some degree to explain the care worn and joyless countenance of the hostess. When Butler and his companion were ushered by Lynch into her presence, she gave them no other welcome than a slight nod of the head, and continued to ply her task at the wheel with unremitted assiduity.

In another corner of the room sat a smart looking young girl who, at this moment, was employed in carding wool. She was a sylvan Hebe, just verging upon womanhood, with a round, active and graceful figure which was adorned with that zealous attention to neatness and becoming ornament that in every station of life, to a certain extent, distinguishes those of the sex who are gifted with beauty. Her cheek had the rich bloom of high health; a full round blue eye seemed habitually to laugh with pleasure; and the same trick of a happy temperament had stamped its mark upon the lines of her mouth.—Her accost was altogether different from that of

the mistress of the house. She arose from her work immediately upon the entrance of the strangers, courtesied with a modest and silent reserve, and then proceeded to gather up the rolls of carded wool at her feet and to dispose of them in a chest near at hand. Having done this, she left the apartment, not without casting sundry prying glances towards the guests.

Another member of the family was an aged female:—she had perhaps seen her eightieth winter. Her attenuated frame seemed to be hovering on the verge of dissolution: a hollow cheek, a sunken, moist eye, and a tremulous palsied motion of the head denoted the melancholy period of dotage; and it was apparent at a glance that this unfortunate being had far outlived both her capacity for enjoyment and the sympathy of her kindred. She now sat in a low elbow-chair, with her head almost in contact with her knees, upon the stone hearth, bending over a small fire of brushwood which had been kindled as well for the purpose of preparing the evening meal as for the comfort of the ancient dame herself—the chilliness of nightfall rendering this additional warmth by no means unpleasant. The beldam silently smoked a short pipe, unmoved by any thing that occurred in the apartment, and apparently engrossed with the trivial care of directing the smoke, as she puffed it from her lips, into a current that should take it up the chimney.

Michael Lynch, who acted as landlord in the casual absence of Wat Adair, had no other connection with the family than that of being joint owner, with the lord of this wild domain, of a small saw-mill in the vicinity, the particular superintendence of which was his especial province. He was, therefore, at particular seasons of the year, an in-dweller at the homestead, and sufficiently in authority to assume a partial direction in the affairs of the house. This man now replaced his rifle upon the pegs appropriated to receive it, and then offered Butler and Robinson chairs, as he said to the mistress of the family,—

‘Here’s Horse Shoe Robinson, Mrs. Adair,—and this other man I think they call Mr. Butler:—they’ve come

for a night's lodging. I believe Wat will be right glad to see them.'

'You are not often visited with travellers in this part of the country,'—said Butler, addressing the matron as he drew his chair near enough to the fire to dry his clothes which were still wet.

'We have enough of them—such as they are,'—replied the woman,—'and it's a dangerous thing, when there's so many helpless women at home, to be opening the door to all sorts of persons.'

'You, at least, run no risk in offering shelter to us this evening,'—returned Butler:—'we are strangers to the quarrel that prevails in your district.'

'People puts on so many pretences,'—said the woman—'that there's no knowing them.'

'You have a fine troop of boys and girls,'—continued Butler, patting the head of one of the boys who had summoned courage to approach him, after various shy reconnoitings of his person.—'Your settlement will require enlargement before long.'

'There is more children than is needful,'—replied the hostess,—'they are troublesome brats—but poor people generally have the luck that way.'

'Does your husband ever serve with the army, madam?'—asked Butler.—

The woman stopped spinning for a moment, and turning her face towards Butler with a scowl, muttered—

'How does that matter concern you?'

'Pardon me,'—replied Butler,—'I was recommended to Mr. Adair as a friend, and supposed I might approach his house without suspicion.'

'Wat Adair is a fool,'—said the wife,—'who is never content but when he has other people thrusting their spoons into his mess.'

'Wat's a wiser man than his wife,'—interrupted Robinson bluntly,—'and takes good care that no man thrusts his spoon into his mess without paying for it.—You know Wat and me knows each other of old, Mrs. Adair—and devil a ha' penny, did Wat ever lose by good manners yet.'

'And who are you to talk, forsooth,—Horse Shoe Ro-

binson?"—exclaimed the ill-favoured dame, tartly.—"Who are you to talk of Wat Adair?—If he knows you he knows no good of you, I'm sure! I warrant you have come here on no honest business now—you and your tramping friend. What do you do up here in the woods, when there is work enough for hearty men below?—No good, I will undertake. It is such as you, Horse Shoe Robinson, and your drinking, rioting, broadsword cronies that has given us all our troubles here.—You know Wat Adair?"

'A little consideration, good woman! Not so fast—you run yourself out of breath,'—said Robinson, mildly, interrupting this flood of oburgation.—'Why, you are as spiteful as a hen with a fresh brood! Remember, Wat and me are old friends. Wat has been at my house both before the war and since,—and I have been here—all in friendship you know.—And many's the buck I have help Wat to fetch down. What's the use of tantrums? If we had been thieves, Mrs. Adair, you couldn't have sarved us worse.—Why its onreasonable in you to fly in a man's face so.'

'I'll vouch for Horse Shoe Robinson, Mrs. Peggy Adair,'—said Lynch.—'You oughtn't to think harm of him;—and you know it isn't long since we heard Wat talk of him, and say he would like to see him once more!—

'Well, it's my way,'—replied the hostess, soothed down into a placid mood by this joint expostulation.—'We have had cause to be suspicious, and I own I am suspicious.—But, Horse Shoe Robinson, I can't say I have any thing against you—you and your friend may be welcome for me.'

'Hey day!'—exclaimed the old crone from the chimney corner.—'Who is talking about Horse Shoe Robinson?—Is this Horse Shoe?—Come here, good man,'—she said, beckoning with her finger to the sergeant.—'Come close and let me look at you.—Galbraith Robinson, as I am a sinner!—All the way from the Waxhaws.—Who'd'a thought to find you here amongst the Tories?—Such a racketting whig as you. Hey, day!'

'Whisht granny!'—said Robinson almost in a whisper. 'Don't call names.'

'We are all Tories here,'—said the old woman, heedless of the sergeant's caution—'ever since last Thursday, when the handsome English officer was here to see Watty, and to count out his gold, like pebble stones.'—

'Grandmother you talk nonsense,'—said the wife.—

'Old Mistress Crosby,'—interposed Robinson,—'is as knowing as she ever was. It's a mark of sense to be able to tell the day of the week when a man changes his coat. But, granny, you oughtn't to talk of Wat's seeing an English officer in his house.'

'Golden guineas, honey!'—continued the drivelling old woman.—'All good gold!—And a proud clinking they make in Watty's homespun pocket.—A countryman's old leather bag, Galbraith Robinson, doesn't often scrape acquaintance with the image of the king's head—ha, ha, ha!—It makes me laugh to think of it!—Ha, ha, ha!—Watty's nose cocked up so high too!—Who but he, the proud gander!—Strutting like quality.—Well, well—pride will have a fall, some day—that's the Lord's truth.—Both pockets full!'—she continued, muttering broken sentences and laughing so violently that the tears ran down her cheeks.

'If you call Wat Adair your friend,'—interrupted the wife sullenly, and addressing Robinson,—'you will show your sense by keeping away from this foolish old woman. She is continually raving with some nonsense that she dreams of nights. You ought to see that she is only half witted.—It's sinful to encourage her talking.—Grandmother you had better go to your bed.'—

'Come this way, deary,'—said the beldam, addressing an infant that toddled across the floor, near to her seat—at the same time extending her shrivelled arm to receive it—'Come to the old body, pretty darling!'

'No,'—lispd the child with an angry scream, and instantly made its way towards the door.—

'Then do you come to me, Peggy,'—she said, looking up at her grand daughter, the mistress of the family, who was still busy with her wheel.—'Wipe my old eye with your handkerchief.—Don't you see I have laughed my eyes dim at Watty and his gold?—And fill my pipe again, Peggy.'

Instead of obeying this command, the mother left her

spinning and ran with some precipitation towards the door to catch up the child, who had staggered to the very verge of the sill, where it paused in imminent peril of falling headlong down the step; and having rescued it from its danger, she returned with the infant in her arms to a chair, where, without scruple at the presence of her visitors, she uncovered her bosom and administered to her offspring that rich and simple bounty which nature has so lavishly provided for the sustenance of our first and tenderest days of helplessness.

‘Well-a-day—I see how it is!’—muttered the ‘grand-mother in an accent of reproof,—‘that’s the way of the world.—Love is like a running river—it goes downward and downward—but doesn’t come back to the spring. The poor old granny in the chimney corner is a withered tree up the stream, and the youngest born is a pretty flower on the bank below. Love leaves the old tree and goes to the flower.—It went from me to Peggy’s mother, and so downward and downward—but it never will come back again. The old granny’s room is more wanted than her company—she ought to be nailed up in her coffin and put to sleep down, down in the cold ground.—Well, well!—But Watty’s a proud wretch—that’s for certain!’—

In this strain the aged dame continued to pour forth a stream of garrulity exhibiting a mixture of the silly dreamings of dotage, with a curious remainder of the scraps and saws of former experience—a strange compound of futile drivelling and shrewd and quick sagacity.

During the period of the foregoing dialogue, preparations were making for supper. These were conducted principally under the superintendence of our Hebe, who, my reader will recollect, some time since escaped from the room, and who, as Butler learned, in the course of the evening, was a niece of Adair’s wife and bore the kindly name of Mary Musgrove. The part which she took in the concerns of the family was in accordance with the simple manners of the time, and such as might be expected from her relationship. She was now seen arranging a broad table, and directing the domestics in the disposition of sundry dishes of venison, bacon and corn bread, with such other items of fare as belonged to the

sequestered and forest-bound region in which Adair resided.

Mary was frequently caught directing her regards towards Butler, whose face was handsome enough to have rendered such a thing quite natural from a young girl: but she seemed to be moved by more than ordinary interest,—as the closeness of her scrutiny almost implied a suspicion in her mind of his disguise. In truth there was some incongruity between his manners and the peasant dress he wore, which an eye like Mary's might have detected, notwithstanding the plainness of demeanour which Butler studied to assume.

'We have nothing but corn bread in the house,'—said Mary in a low tone to her kinswoman,—'perhaps the gentlemen (here she directed her eye, for the fiftieth time, to Butler) expected to get wheat.—Had I not better pull some roasting-ears from the garden and prepare them?—they will not be amiss with our milk and butter.'—

'Bless you, my dear,'—said Butler, thrown completely off his guard, and showing more gallantry than belonged to the station he affected.—'Give yourself no trouble on our account; we can eat any thing.—I delight in corn cakes and will do ample justice to this savoury venison. Pray do not concern yourself for us.'

'It is as easy as running to the garden,'—said Mary in a sweet and almost laughing tone—

'That's farther, my dear,'—replied Butler,—'than I choose you should run at this time of night. It is dark, my pretty girl.'

'Gracious!' returned Mary with natural emotion—'do you think I am afraid to go as far as the garden in the dark? We have no witches or fairies in our hills to hurt us: and if we had, I know how to keep them away.'

'And how might that be?'

'By saying my prayers, sir. My father taught me,—before my head was as high as the back of yon chair,—a good many prayers: and he told me they would protect me from all sorts of harm, if I only said them in right earnest. And I hear many old people, who ought to know, say the same thing.'

'Your father taught you well and wisely,'—replied

Butler;—'prayer will guard us against many ills, and chiefly against ourselves. But against the harm that others may do us, we should not forget that prudence is also a good safeguard. It is always well to avoid a dangerous path.'

'But, for all that,'—said the maiden smiling,—'I am not afraid to go as far as the garden.'

'If you mean to get the corn,'—interrupted Mistress Adair, in no very kindly tone,—'you had as well go without all this talk. I warrant if you listen to every man who thinks it worth while to jabber in your ear, you will find harm enough, without going far to seek it.'

'I thought it was only civil to speak when I was spoken to,'—replied Mary with an air of mortification.—'But I will be gone this moment.'—and with these words the girl went forth upon her errand.

A moment only elapsed when the door was abruptly thrown open, and the tall and swarthy figure of Wat Adair strode into the room. The glare of the blazing faggots of pine which had been thrown on the fire to light up the apartment, fell broadly over his person and flung a black and uncouth shadow across the floor and upon the opposite wall;—thus magnifying his proportions and imparting a picturesque character to his outward man. A thin, dark, weather-beaten countenance, animated by a bright and restless eye, expressed cunning rather than hardihood, and seemed habitually to alternate between the manifestations of waggish vivacity and distrust. The person of this individual might be said from its want of symmetry, and from a certain slovenly and ungraceful stoop in the head and shoulders, to have been protracted, rather than tall. It better deserved the description of sinewy than muscular, and communicated the idea of toughness in a greater degree than strength. His arms and legs were long, and the habit of keeping the knee bent as he walked, suggested a remote resemblance in his gait to that of a panther and other animals of the same species:—it seemed to be adapted to a sudden leap or spring.

His dress was a coarse and short hunting-shirt of dingy green, trimmed with a profusion of fringe, and sufficiently

open at the collar to disclose his long and gaunt neck: a black leather belt supported a hunting knife and wallet; whilst a pair of rude deer-skin moccasins and a cap manufactured from the skin of some wild animal, and now deprived of its hair by long use, supplied the indispensable gear to either extremity of his person.

Adair's first care was to bestow in their proper places his rifle and powder horn; then to disburden himself of a number of squirrels which were strung carelessly over his person, and, finally, to throw himself into a chair that occupied one side of the fireplace. The light for a moment blinded him, and it was not until he shaded his brow with his hand and looked across the hearth, that he became aware of the presence of the strangers. His first gaze was directed to Butler to whom he addressed the common interrogatory—'travelling in these parts, sir?' and, before time was afforded for a reply to this accost, his eye recognized the sergeant—upon which, starting from his seat, he made up to our sturdy friend and slapping him familiarly on the back, uttered a chuckling laugh, as he exclaimed—

'Why, Galbraith,—is it you man?—To be sure it is!—What wind has blown you up here? Have you been running from red coats—or are you hunting of Tories,—or are you looking for beeves?—Who have you got with you here?'—

'Wat, it don't consarn you to know what brought us here—it is only your business to do the best you can for us whilst we are here,'—replied the sergeant.—'This here gentleman is Mr. Butler, a friend of mine that wants to get across into Georgia—and trouble enough we've had to find our way this far, Wat Adair.—You've got such an uproarious country, and such a cursed set of quarrelsome devils in it, that a peaceable man is clean out of fashion amongst you. We are as wet as muskrats in swimming the river, and as hungry as wolves in winter.'

'And happy,'—said Butler,—'to be at last under the roof of a friend.'—

'Well—I am glad to see you both,'—replied Wat.—'What put it in my head, Galbraith, I am sure I can't

well, but I was thinking about you this very day,—said I to myself, I should just like to see Horse Shoe Robinson—the onconceivable, superfluous, roaring devil! Haw, haw, haw!—

‘You were ashamed of your own company, Wat, and wanted to see a decent man once more,’—replied Horse Shoe, echoing the laugh.

‘Mary Musgrove,—bustle, girl!’—said the woodman, as the maiden entered the room with her arms loaded with ears of Indian corn,—‘bustle, mink!—here are two runaways with stomachs like mill stones to grind your corn.—Horse Shoe, get up from that chist, man, I can give you a little drop of liquor, if you will let me rummage there for it.—Marcus, boy, go bring us in a jug of cool water.—Wife, I’m ’stonished you didn’t think of giving our friends something to drink afore.’—

‘I am sure I don’t pretend to know friend from foe,’—returned the dame,—‘and it is a bad way to find that out by giving them liquor.’

When the boy returned with the water, and the host had helped his guests to a part of the contents of a flask which had been extracted from the chest, Butler took occasion to commend the alacrity of the young servitor.

‘This is one of your children, I suppose?’

‘A sort of a pet cub,’—replied the woodman,—‘Just a small specimen of my fetching up:—trees squirrels like a dog—got the nose of a hound—can track a raccoon in the dark—and the most meddlesome imp about fire-arms you ever see:—here tother day got my rifle and shot away half the hair from his sister’s head—but I reckon I skinned him for it! You can answer for that, Marcus, you shaver—eh?’

‘I expect you did,’—answered the boy pertly,—‘but I don’t mind a whipping when I’ve got room to dodge.’

‘Do you know, Mr. Butler, how I come to call that boy Marcus?’—said Adair.

‘It is one of your family names, perhaps.’

‘Not a bit.—There’s nary another boy nor man in this whole country round has such a name—nor woman, neither. It’s a totally uncommon name. I called him after that there Frenchman that’s come out here to help

general Washington—Marcus Lafayette—and I think it sounds mighty well.’

‘Butler laughed, as he replied,’—‘that was a soldierly thought of yours.—I think you must call your next, Baron, after our old Prussian friend De Kalb’—

‘Do you hear that, wife?’—exclaimed Wat.—‘Keep that in your head, if it will hold there a twelve month.—No occasion to wait longer, haw, haw, haw!’—

‘Wat talks like a natural born fool,’—retorted the wife.—‘We have no friends nor enemies on any side. The boy was called Marcus, because Watty was headstrong, and not because we cared any more for one general nor another. I dare say there is faults enough on both sides, if the truth was told,—and I can’t see what people in the woods have to do with all this jarring about liberty and such nonsense.’

‘Hold your tongue!’—said Wat.—‘Boil your kettle, and give us none of your tinkling brass,—as the Bible calls it. You see, Horse Shoe, there’s such ridings, and burnings, and shooting and murder about here, that these women are scared out of the little wits God has given them: and upon that account we are obliged sometimes to play a little double, just to keep out of harm’s way. But I am sure, I wish no ill to the continental army.’

‘If we thought you did, Wat,’—replied Robinson,—‘we would have slept on the hill to-night, rather than set foot across the sill of your door. Howsever, let’s say nothing about that, I told Mr. Butler that you would give us the best you had—and so you will. I have known Wat Adair, Mr. Butler, a good many years.—We used to call him Wat with the double-hand.—Show us your fist here, Wat.—Look at that, sir!—It’s as broad as a shovel!’—

‘Cutting of trees,’—said the woodman, as he spread his large horny-knuckled hand upon the supper table,—‘and handling of logs, will make any man’s paw broad,—and mine wa’n’t small at first.’

‘Ha, ha, ha!’—ejaculated the sergeant.—‘You ha’n’t forgot Dick Rowley over here on Congaree, Wat,—Wal-
loping Dick as they nicknamed him,—and the scrimmage you had with him when he sot to laughing at you because they accused you for being light-fingered, and your

letting him see that you had a heavy hand, by giving him the full weight of it upon his ear that almost drove him through the window of the bar room at the Cross roads?—You ha'n't forgot that?—and his drawing his knife on you?—

'To be sure I ha'n't. That fellow was about as superfluous a piece of wicked flesh—as I say—as a man would meet on a summer's day journey. But, for all that, Horse Shoe, he wa'n't going to supererogate me, without getting as good as he sent. When I come across one of your merry fellows that's for playing cantraps on a man, it's my rule to make them pay the piper,—and that's a pretty good rule, Horse Shoe, all the world through.—But come, here is supper,—draw up, Mr. Butler?—

Mary Musgrove having completed the arrangement of the board whilst this conversation was in progress, the family now sat down to their repast. It was observable, during the meal, that Mary was very attentive in the discharge of the offices of the table, and especially when they were required by Butler. There was a modest and natural courtesy in her demeanour that attracted the notice of our soldier, and enhanced the kindly impression which the artless girl had made upon him; and it was, accordingly, with a feeling composed, in one degree, of curiosity to learn more of her character, and, in another, of that sort of tenderness which an open hearted man is apt to entertain towards an ingenuous and pretty female, that he took occasion after supper, when Mary had seated herself on the threshold of the porch, to fall into conversation with her.—

'You do not live here, I think I have gathered,—but are only on a visit?'—was the remark addressed to the maiden.

'No, sir,—it is thirty good long miles by the shortest road, from this to my father's house;—Mistress Adair is my mother's sister, and that makes her my aunt, you know, sir.'

'And your father's name?'

'Allen Musgrove;—he has a mill, sir, on the Ennoree.'

'You are the miller's daughter, then. Well, that's a pretty title.—I suppose they call you so?'

'The men sometimes call me,'—replied Mary, rising to her feet, and leaning carelessly against one of the upright timbers that supported the porch,—'the miller's pretty daughter, but the women call me plain Mary Musgrove.'—

'Faith, my dear, the men come nearer to the truth than the women.'

'They say not,'—replied the maiden,—'I have heard, and sometimes I have read in good books—at least, they called them good books—that you mustn't believe the men.'

'And why should you not?'

'I don't well know why not,'—returned the girl doubtfully,—'but I am young, and, may be, I shall find it out by and by.'

'God forbid,'—said Butler,—'that you should ever gain that experience. But there are many toils spread for the feet of innocence in this world—and it is well to have a discreet eye and good friends.'

'I am seventeen, sir,'—replied Mary,—'come next month,—and though I have travelled backwards and forwards from here to Ennoree, and once to Camden, which, you know sir, is a good deal of this world to see, I never knew any body that thought harm of me. But I don't dispute there are men to be afraid of, and some that nobody could like. And yet I think a good man can be told by his face.'

'Are you sure of that?'

'Yes. My father is a good man, and every one says you may see it in his looks.'

'I should like to know your father,'—said Butler.

'I am sure he would be glad to know you, sir.'

'Now, my pretty miller's daughter, why do you think so?'

'Because you are a gentleman,'—replied the girl, cooing,—'for all your homespun clothes.'

'Ha!—pray how have you found that out?'

'You talk differently from our people, sir. Your words or your voice—I can't rightly tell which—are softer than I have been used to hear. And you don't look, and walk and behave as if homespun had been all you ever wore.'

'And is that all?'

'You stop to consider, as if you were studying what would please other people; and you do not step so heavy, sir;—and you do not swear; and you do not seem to like to give trouble—I can't think, sir, that you have been always used to such as are hereabouts. And then there's another reason, sir,'—added the maiden, almost in a whisper.

'What is that?'—asked Butler, smiling.

'Why, sir, when you stooped down to pick up your fork that fell from the table, I saw a blue ribbon round your neck, and a beautiful gold picture hanging to it. None but gentlemen of quality carry such things about them: and as there is so much contriving and bloody doings going on about here, I was sure you wasn't what you seemed.'

'For heaven's sake, my dear,'—exclaimed Butler, startled by the disclosure of the maiden's suspicion, which was so naturally accounted for,—'keep this to yourself,—and the time may come when I shall be able to reward your fidelity.—If you have any good will towards me,—as I hope you have,—tell nobody what you have seen.'

'Never fear me, sir,'—returned the maid,—'I wouldn't let on to any one in this house for the world. I am for general Washington and the congress—which is more than I think the people here are.'

'Indeed!'—muttered Butler, thoughtfully, and scarce above his breath. 'What side does your father take, Mary?'

'My father is an old man, sir. And he reads his Bible, and every night, before we go to bed, he prays aloud before us all—I mean all that belong to his house—for quiet once more and peace. His petition is that there may be an end of strife, and that the sword and spear may be turned into the pruning hook and plough share—you know the words, sir, perhaps—for they are in the good book—and so he doesn't take any side. But then the English officers are not far off, and they take his house and use it as they please, so that he has no mind of his own. And almost all the people round us are Tories, and we are afraid of our lives if we do not say whatever they say.'

'Alas! that's the misfortune of many more than your father's household. But how comes it that you are a friend of general Washington?'

'Oh, sir,—I think he is our friend:—and then he is a good man. And I have a better reason still to be on his side,'—added the maiden tremulously, with her head averted.

'What reason, my good girl?'

'John Ramsay, sir.'

'Indeed!—a very cogent reason, I doubt not, my pretty maid of the mill. And how does this reason operate?'

'We have a liking, sir,'—she replied bashfully, but with innocent frankness;—'he is for Washington—and we are to be married when the war is over.'

'Truly, that is a most excellent reason! Who is John Ramsay?'

'He is a trooper, sir,—and out with general Sumpter. We don't see him often now—for he is afraid to come home, excepting when the Tories are away.'

'These Tories are very troublesome, Mary,'—said Butler, laughing,—'they annoy us all, on our side of the question. But love John Ramsay, my dear, and don't be ashamed of it—for I'll warrant he is a brave fellow, and deserves a pretty girl with a true heart, for his love to his country.'—

'That he does!'—replied Mary;—'for his greatest fault is, that he ventures too much. If you should see him, sir, I would like you just to drop him a hint that he ought to take more care of himself:—he would mind it from you, but he puts me off with a laugh when I tell him so.'

'If I have the schooling of him, he shall be more cautious for your sake—but the current of true love never did run smooth, Mary—remember that.'

'I must go into the house—my aunt Peggy calls me,'—interrupted the maiden.—'I will keep the secret, sir,'—she added, as she retired from the porch to the household service where her presence was demanded.

'Simple, confiding and innocent girl,'—ejaculated Butler, as he now strolled forth under the starlit canopy of night,—'how are you contrasted with the rough and

savage natures around you!—I wear but a thin disguise when this unpractised country girl is able so soon to penetrate it. And this miniature, too!—Oh, Mildred, that the very talisman I bear about me to guard me from evil, should betray me!—Well, this discovery admonishes me that I should wear that image still nearer to my heart. There,’—he continued, as he buttoned his waistcoat across his breast,—‘lie closer and more concealed. I doubt this double-faced woodman, and almost believe in the seeming frivolous dotings of the crone at his fire-side. Now, God defend us from treachery and ambuscade!’

Robinson, at this moment being on his way to the stable, was met by Butler who half whispered.—‘Good sergeant, keep your eyes about you,—and, mark me,—do not omit to take our weapons to our chamber.—I have reasons for this caution: I would not trust these people too far.’

‘Wat dare not play us a trick, major,’—replied the sergeant. ‘He knows I would shake the life out of his carcass, if I saw him take one step of a traitor. Besides, in this here war time it’s a part of my discipline to be always ready for stolen marches. As you say, major, we will stack arms where we sleep. There is no trust in this dubious country that isn’t something the surer with powder and ball to back it.’—

With this intimation the sergeant continued his walk, and Butler retiring to the family group seated himself near the fire.

Wat Adair and his crony, Michael Lynch, had each lighted a pipe, and were now in close conference under the cover of their own smoke, amidst the combined din of romping children and of the noisy spinning wheel of the wife, which gave life and occupation to the apartment.

‘How far do you expect to travel to-morrow?’—asked the host, as Butler drew a chair near him.

‘That will depend very much,’—replied Butler,—‘upon the advice you may give us.’—

‘You wish to get across here into Georgia?’—continued Wat.

'By the route least liable to molestation,'—added the major.

'Let me see, Michael,—Grindall's Ford is the best point to make—then there's Christie's about three miles beyond.'—

'Just so,'—replied Lynch,—'that will make about twenty-seven and three are thirty miles—an easy day's journey.'

'In that case,'—said Adair,—'if you know the road—doesn't Horse Shoe know it, sir?'—

'I rather think not,'—answered Butler.—

'Well—it is a little tangled, to be sure—but if you will wait in the morning until I look at my wolf trap—which is only a step off—I will go with you part of the way, just to see you through one or two cross paths:—after that all is clear enough. You will have a long day before you and with good horses not much to do.'

'Are we likely to meet parties on the road?'—asked Butler.

'Oh, Lord, sir, no chance of it,'—replied the woodman:—'every thing is drawing so to a head down below at Camden, twixt Cornwallis and Gates, that we have hardly any thing but old women left to keep the country free of Indians.'

'And how have you escaped the levy?'—inquired the major.—

'He, he, he!'—chuckled our host—'there's a trick in that—they call me a man of doubtful principles, and neither side are willing to own me,'—he added with a tone that seemed to indicate a sense of his own cleverness.—'But bless you, sir, if I chose to speak out, there wouldn't be much doubt in the case. Would there, Michael?'

'Not if you was to be plain in declaring your sentiments,'—answered Lynch, sedately puffing out a huge cloud of smoke.

'Betwixt you and me, sir,'—continued Wat, putting his hand up to his mouth and winking an eye at Butler,—'the thing's clear enough.—But these are ticklish times, Mr. Butler, and the wise man keepeth his own counsel—as the scripture says.—You understand me, I dare say.'

‘Perhaps I do,’—returned Butler. And here the conversation dropped,—Wat and his companion gravely pouring forth volumes of tobacco-fumes in silence, until the sergeant having made his visit to the stable, now re-entered the room.

‘Wat,’—said Robinson,—‘show us where we are to sleep. Mr. Butler, to my thinking, it’s time to be turning in.’

Then throwing his rifle upon one arm, and Butler’s holsters over the other, the sergeant waited in the middle of the floor until Mary Musgrove, at the order of Adair, took a candle in her hand and beckoned our travellers to follow her out at the door. The maiden conducted her charge along the porch to the opposite end of the cabin, where she pointed out their chamber. After bidding their pretty conductress ‘good night,’ our travellers prepared themselves for that repose, which their wearied frames did not long seek in vain.

CHAPTER XIV.

SOMETHING VERY LIKE A DREAM.

It was after midnight, and the inmates of the woodman’s cabin had been some hours at rest, when Mary Musgrove’s sleep was disturbed by strange and unwonted alarms. She was dreaming of Arthur Butler, and a crowd of pleasant visions flitted about her pillow, when, suddenly, clouds darkened the world of her dream and images of bloodshed caused her to shudder. Horrid shapes appeared to her, marching with stealthy pace through her apartment, and a low and smothered footfall seemed to strike her ear, like the ticking of a death-watch. The fright awakened her, but when she came to herself all was still. Her chamber was at the opposite end of the cabin from that where Butler and Robinson slept, and it was separated from the room occupied by Lynch, only by a thin partition of boards. The starlight through her window fell upon the floor, just touching, as

it passed, the chair over which Mary had hung her clothes, and lighting, with a doubtful and spectral light, the prominent points of the pile of garments, in such manner as to give it the semblance of some unearthly thing. Mary Musgrove had the superstition common to rustic education, and, as her dream had already filled her mind with apprehensions, she now trembled when her eye fell upon what seemed to her a visitant from another world. For some moments she experienced that most painful of all sufferings,—the agony of young and credulous minds when wrought upon by their horror of spectres in the night. Gradually, however, the truth came to her aid, and she saw the dreaded ghost disrobed of his terrors, and changed into a familiar and harmless reality. But this night-fear was scarcely dissipated before she again heard, what in her sleep had conjured up the train of disagreeable images, the noise of footsteps in the adjoining room. In another instant she recognized the sound of voices, conversing in a half whisper.

‘Michael,’ said the first voice,—‘Damn it man,—will you never awake?—Rouse yourself: it is time to be stirring.’

‘Wat!’—exclaimed the second voice, with a loud yawn, whilst, at the same moment, the creaking of the bedstead and a sullen sound upon the floor, showed that the speaker had risen from his couch—‘Is it you?—I have hardly gone to bed, before you are here to rouse me up.—What o’clock is it?’—

‘It is nearly one,’—replied Wat Adair. ‘And let me tell you, you have no time to lose. Hugh Habershaw is good ten miles off—and you must be back by day light.’

‘You might have given me another hour I think—if it was only to consider over the right way of setting about this thing, Always look before you leap—that’s common sense.’

‘You were always a heavy-headed devil’—said Adair—‘and take as much spurring as a spavined horse.—What have you to do with considering? Isn’t all fixed?—Jog, man, jog. You have a beautiful starlight: and I had the crop-ear put up in the stable last night, that no time might be lost—so up, and saddle and away!’—

'Well, you needn't be so d—d busy!—don't you see that I am getting ready?'—

'Quiet, Mike! you talk too loud. Take your shoes in your hand,—you can put them on when you get into the perch.'

'There—give me my coat—Wat:—and I think I should have no objection to a drop before I set out. It's raw riding of a morning. Now tell me exactly what I am to say to Hugh Habershaw.'

'Tell him'—replied, Wat—'that we have got Horse Shoe Robinson and major Butler of the continental army, as snug as a pair of foxes in a bag,—and that I will let them run exactly at seven;—and'

'Not to interrupt you, Wat'—said the other—'let me ask you a question before you go on.—Suppose this shouldn't be the man?—Are you sure of it?—It would be a d—d unchristian job to give over any other human being to such a set of bloodhounds as Hugh Habershaw and his gang.'

'Shaw, Mike—you are a fool!—Who,—in the name of all the imps—could it be, but major Butler! Weren't we expecting him along with Horse Shoe,—and just at this time?'

'It looks likely enough,'—replied Lynch.—'So, go on.'

'Tell Hugh to be ready at the Dogwood Spring, at the latest, by eight o'clock. I'll give him a game to play that will supple his joints for him. And mind me, Mike—warn the greasy captain to have his whole squad with him—for Horse Shoe Robinson, you know, is not to be handled by boys—it will be a bull fight or I'm mistaken.'

'The major seems to have a wicked eye too, Wat'—said Lynch—'I shouldn't like much to be in his way if he was angry—these copperheads are always in a coil ready to strike. But, Wat, how if they don't ride by the Dogwood Spring?'—

'Leave that to me,—I'll contrive to go as far as the forks of the road with them. And then if they don't take the right hand fork, why, you may say its for want of my not knowing how to tell a lie.'

'Now, Wat Adair—I don't like to spoil sport, but, may be, you have never thought whether it would be worth

while just to take tother side, and tell Horse Shoe the whole business. Couldn't we, don't you think, get as much money, and just as honestly, by hoisting colours with major Butler?'—

'But I *have* thought of that—and it won't do,—for two reasons. First, these continentals are on the down-hill, and money is as scarce with them as honesty with the red coats:—and, second, the Tories have got so much the upper hand in the whole country, that I should have my house burnt down and my children thrown into the blaze of it, in less than three days, if I was to let these fellows slip through my fingers.'

'Well I never knew'—said Mike Lynch—'any piece of villiany that hadn't some good reasons to stand by it, and that's what makes it agreeable to my conscience to take a hand.'

'Why, you off-scouring,'—replied Wat—'it is enough to make Old Scratch laugh, to hear you talk about conscience!—There aint no such a thing going in these days.—So, be off—I'll look for you at daylight.'

'I'll ride Wat, as if the devil was on my crupper—so good bye!'

The cessation of the voices, the distant tramp of Lynch when he had left the cabin, and the cautious retreat of Wat Adair to his chamber, told to Mary that the affair was settled, and the plan of treachery in full career towards its consummation.

The dialogue that had just passed in the hearing of the maiden, disclosed a plot that deeply agitated and distressed her. What did it become her to do—was the first question that presented itself to her reflection, as soon as she was sufficiently self-possessed to turn her thoughts upon herself. Was it in her power to avert the impending disaster which threatened the lives, perhaps, of those who had sought the hospitality of her kinsman?—Perplexed, dismayed and uncertain how to act, she had recourse to an expedient natural to her education, and such as would appear most obvious to a feeble and guileless female:—it was to the simple and faith-inspired expedient of prayer. And now, in artless but sincere language,—having first risen up in her bed, and bent her body across

her pillow, in the attitude of supplication, she fervently implored the support of Heaven, in her present strait, and sought wisdom and strength to conceive and to do that which was needful for the security of the individuals whose peace was threatened by this conspiracy.

'I will arise',—she said, as she finished her short and earnest prayer,—'with the first light of the dawn, and await the coming of the strangers from their chamber,—and I will then be the first to tell them of the snare that prepared for them.'—With this resolve she endeavoured to compose herself to rest,—but sleep fled her eye lids, and her anxious thoughts dwelt upon and even magnified the threatened perils. It might be too late, she reflected, to wait for the dawn of day: Adair might be before her at the door of the guests, and his constant presence might keep from her all hope of being able to communicate the important secret to them: it was undoubtedly her surest resource to take advantage of the stillness of the night, whilst the household were wrapt in sleep, and apprise the strangers of their danger. But then, how was she to make her way to their apartment, and arouse them, at this hour, from their slumbers? To what suspicions might the attempt expose her, even from Arthur Butler himself?—And, more particularly, what would John Ramsay think of it, if the story should be afterwards told to her disadvantage?—

This last was an interrogatory which Mary Musgrove as often found putting to herself, in winding up a self-communion. On the present occasion this appeal to the opinion of John Ramsay had the opposite effect from that which might have been expected from it. It suggested new lights to her mind, and turned her thoughts into another current and brought that resolution to her aid which her prayer was intended to invoke.—What would John Ramsay think,—he, the friend of liberty, and of Washington,—the compatriot of Butler and Robinson, now toiling with them in the same cause:—What would he think, if she, his own Mary (and the maiden paused a moment on this phrase) did *not* do every thing in her power to save these soldiers of independence from the blow which treachery was now aiming at them?—

'John would have good right to be angry with me,'—she breathed out in a voice that even startled herself,—'if I did not give them full warning of what I have heard. This I am sure of—he will believe *my* story whatever others may say.'

Innocence and purity of mind are both sword and shield in this world, and no less inspire confidence to defy the malice and uncharitableness of enemies, than they strengthen the arm to do what is right. Mary, therefore, resolved to forego all maidenly scruples and bravely to perform her duty, come what might; and having settled upon this conclusion she impatiently awaited the moment when she might venture forth upon her office of humanity. In this situation it was not long before she heard the distant footfall of a horse's gallop along the road, indicating to her the departure of Michael Lynch upon his traitorous embassy.

The time seemed to be propitious, so Mary arose and dressed herself. Then tripping stealthily to the door that opened upon the porch, she undid the bolt. A loud and prolonged creak, from the wooden hinges, caused her to shake from head to foot. She listened for a moment, and, finding that no one stirred, stepped forth with the timid and faltering step which would no less have marked the intent of the burglar, than, as now it did, the frightened motion of a guardian spirit bent upon an errand of good. Midway along the porch she had to pass the window of Adair's apartment: first, the low growl, and then the sudden bark of the watch dog saluted her ear, and made her blood run cold. The maiden's hand, however, soothed him into silence; but the noise had attracted the notice of Wat Adair who grumbled out a short curse, from within, which was distinctly audible to Mary. She hastily fled to the further end of the porch, and there stood, cowering close against the wall, almost as mute and motionless as a statue, scarce daring to breathe, and poised, as in the act to run, with her weight resting on one foot, the other raised from the floor. In this position, she remained during a long interval of fear, until, at length, convinced that all was quiet, she again ventured forward. The window of the travellers' chamber looked out from the gable

end of the dwelling and she was now immediately before it. One of the beds of the room, she knew, was placed beside this window, and was occupied by either Butler or Robinson. Tremblingly and mistrustfully, she gave a feeble tap with her hand against the sash. There was no answer: the sleep within was the sleep of tired men, and was not to be broken by the light play of a maiden's fingers. She now picked up a pebble from the ground, and, with it, again essayed to wake the sleepers. This, too, was unsuccessful. In utter hopelessness of accomplishing her purpose by other means, she ventured upon raising the sash; and having done so, she thrust her head partially into the room as she held up the window-frame with one hand, crying out with an almost choked voice.

'Mr. Butler!—Mr. Butler!—For mercy,—awake!'—

There was no other response but the deep-breathings of the sleep-subdued inmates.—

'Oh—what shall I do?'—she exclaimed as her heart beat with a violent motion.—'I might as well call to the dead.—Mr. Galbraith Robinson!—Ah me,—I cannot rouse them without alarming the whole house!—Major Butler,'—she continued, laying a particular stress upon this designation of his rank.—'Oh, good sir, awake!'

'What do you want?'—muttered Butler in a smothered and sleep-stifled voice—as he turned himself heavily on his pillow, like one moved by a dream.

'Oh, heaven, sir, make no noise!—I am ashamed to tell you who I am,'—said the terrified girl,—'but I come for your good—I have something to tell you.'

'Away—away!'—cried Butler, speaking in his sleep,—
'I will not be disturbed:—I do not fear you.—Begone!'

'Oh, sir,—hear me,'—entreated the maiden,—'the people in this house know you,—and they are contriving evil against you.'—

'It makes no difference,'—muttered the only half-awakened soldier.—'I will ride where it suits me, if the Tories were as thick as the leaves of the trees.'

'There are people gathering to do you harm to-morrow,'—continued Mary, not suspecting the unconsciousness of the person to whom she addressed herself,—'and I only come with a word of warning to you. Do not

ride by the Dogwood Spring, to-morrow, nor take the right hand road at the first forks:—there are wicked men upon that road.—‘Have your eye,’—she whispered,—‘upon my uncle Walter.—Ride fast and far, before you stop;—and pray, sir,—as you think fairly of me—Mary Musgrove, sir,—the daughter of Allen Musgrove, the miller—oh, do not tell my name. If you knew John Ramsay, sir, I am certain you would believe me.’—

The watch dog had growled once or twice during the period while Mary spoke, and at this moment the door of the principal room of the cabin was heard to move slightly ajar, and the voice of Adair in a whisper, reached the girl’s ear.’—

‘Hist—Michael!—In the devil’s name what brought you back? Why do you loiter, when time is so precious?’

A long, heavy and inarticulate exclamation, such as belongs to disturbed sleep escaped from Butler.—

‘Father of heaven,—I shall let the window fall with fright!’—inwardly ejaculated Mary, as she still occupied her uneasy station.—‘Hush—it is the voice of my uncle.’

There was a painful pause—

A heavy rush of wind agitated the trees, and sweeping along the porch caused some horse-gear that was suspended against the wall, to vibrate with a rustling noise:—the sound pierced Mary’s ear like the accents of a ghost, and her strength had well nigh failed her from faint-heartedness.

‘I thought it was Michael,’—said Adair, speaking to some one within,—‘but it is only the rattling of harness and the dreaming of Drummer. These dogs have the trick of whining and growling in their sleep according to a way of their own. They say a dog sometimes sees a spirit at night.—But man or devil it’s all one to old Drummer! Sleep quiet, you superfluous! and have done with your snoring!’—

With these words, the door was again closed, and Mary, for the moment, was released from suffering.

‘Remember,’—she uttered in the most fear-stricken tone, as she lowered the sash.—‘Be sure to take the left hand road at the first fork!’—

‘In God’s name,—what is it?—Where are you?’—Was

the exclamation heard by Mary as the window was closing. She did not halt for further parley or explanation, but now hastily stole back, like a frightened bird towards its thicket. Panting and breathless, she regained her chamber, and, with the utmost expedition, betook herself again to bed, where, gratified by the consciousness of having done a good action, and fully trusting that her caution would not be disregarded, she gradually dismissed her anxiety, and, before the hour of dawning, had fallen into a gentle though not altogether unperturbed slumber.

CHAPTER XV.

HORSE SHOE AND BUTLER RESUME THEIR JOURNEY, WHICH IS
DELAYED BY A SAVAGE INCIDENT.

MORNING broke and, with the first day-streak, Robinson turned out of his bed, leaving Butler so heartily bound up in the spell of the drowsy god, that he was not even moved by the loud and heavy tramp of the sergeant, as that weighty personage donned his clothes. Horse Shoe's first habit in the morning, which had now almost become an instinct, was to look after Captain Peter,—and he accordingly directed his steps towards the rude shed which served as a stable, at the foot of the hill. Here, to his surprise, he discovered that the fence-rails which, the night before, had been set up as a barrier across the vacant doorway, had been let down, and that no horses were to be seen about the premises.—

‘What hocus pocus has been here?’—said he to himself, as he gazed upon the deserted stable.—‘Have these rummaging and thieving Tories been out maraudering in the night?—or it is only one of Captain Peter’s old-sodger tricks,—letting down bars and leading the young geldings into mischief?—That beast can snuff the scent of a corn field or a pasture ground as far as a crow smells gunpowder. He’d dislocate and corruptify any innocent stable of horses in Carolina!’—

In doubt to which of these causes to assign the disappearance of their cavalry, the sergeant ascended the hill hard-by, and directed his eye over the neighbouring fields, hoping to discover the deserters in some of the adjacent pastures. But he could get no sight of them. He then returned to the stable and fell to examining the ground about the door, in order to learn something of the departure of the animals by their tracks. These were sufficiently distinct to convince him that Captain Peter, whose shoes had a peculiar mark well known to the sergeant, had eloped during the night, in company with the major's gelding and two others,—these being all, as Horse Shoe had observed, that were in the stable at the time he had retired to bed. He forthwith followed the foot-prints which led him into the high road, and thence along it, westward, for about two hundred paces, where a set of field bars, now thrown down, afforded entrance into the cornfield. At this point the sergeant traced the deviation of three of the horses into the field, whilst the fourth, it was evident, had continued upon the road.

The conclusion which Galbraith drew from this phenomenon was expressed by a wise shake of the head and a profound fit of abstraction. He took his seat upon a projecting rail at the angle of the fence,—and began to sum up conjectures in the following phrase:—

‘The horse that went along that road, never travelled of his own free will:—that’s as clear as preaching. Well, he wa’n’t rode by Wat, nor by Mike Lynch,—or else they are arlier men than I take them to be:—but still, I’ll take a book oath that creetur went with a bridle across his head, and a pair o’ legs astride his back. And who ever held that bridle in his hand, did it for no good!—Scampering here and scampering there, and scouring woods, in the night too, when the country is as full of Tories, as a beggar’s coat with —, its a dogmatical bad sign—take it which way you will. Them three horses had the majority,—and it is the nature of these beasts always to follow the majority: that’s an observation I have made;—and, in particular, if there’s a cornfield, or an oat-patch, or a piece of fresh pasture to be got into, every individual horse is unanimous on the subject.’

Whilst the sergeant was engrossed with these reflections, 'he was ware'—as the old ballads have it—of a man trudging past him along the road. This was no other than Wat Adair, who was striding forward with a long and rapid step, and with all the appearance of one intent upon some pressing business.—

'Halloo!—who goes there?—where away so fast, Wat?' was Robinson's challenge.—

'Horse Shoe!'—exclaimed Adair, in a key that bespoke surprise, and even alarm,—'Ha, ha, ha!—By the old woman's pipe, you frightened me! I'll swear, Galbraith Robinson, I heard you snoring as I passed by your window three minutes ago.'

'I'll swear that's not the truest word you ever spoke in your life, Wat;—though, true enough for you, mayhap. Do you see how cleverly yon light has broke across the whole sky?—When I first turned out this morning it was a little ribbon of day: the burning of a block house at night, ten miles off, would have made a broader streak.—It was your own snoring you heard, Wat,—you have only forgot under whose window it was.'—

'What old witch has been pinching you, Horse Shoe, that *you* are up so early?'—asked Adair.—'Get back to the house, man, I will be with you presently—I have my farm to look after—I'll see you presently.'—

'You seem to me to be in a very onreasonable hurry, Wat, considering that you have the day before you. But, softly, I'll walk with you—if you have no unliking to it.'—

'No, no—I'm busy, Galbraith;—I'm going to look after my traps—I'd rather you'd go back to the house and hurry breakfast.—Go!—You would only get scratched with briars if you followed me.'

'Ha, ha, ha!—Wat!—Briars, did you say?—Look here, man,—do you see them there legs? Do they look as if they couldn't laugh at yourn in any sort of scrambling I had a mind to set them to?—Tut—I'll go with you just to larn you the march drill.'

'Then I'll not budge a foot after the traps.'—

'You are crusty, Wat Adair;—what's the matter with you?'—

'Is major Butler up yet?'—asked the woodman thoughtfully.

'*Who* do you say?—*Major* Butler.'

'*Major*?'—cried Adair, with affected surprise.—

'Yes, you called him major Butler?'

'I had some dream, I think, about him:—or, didn't you call him so yourself, Horse Shoe?'

'Most undoubtedly, I did not,'—replied Robinson seriously.

'Then I dreamt it,—Horse Shoe:—these dreams sometimes get into the head, like things we have been told. But, Galbraith, tell me the plain up-and-down truth—what brings you and Mr. Butler into these parts? What are you after in Georgia?—It does seem strange to find men that are wanted below, straggling here in our woods at such a time as this.'—

'There are two sorts of men in this world, Wat,'—said the sergeant, with a smile,—'them that axes questions, and them that wont answer questions—Now, which, do you think, I belong to? Why, to the last—you tinker!—Where are our horses, Wat?—Tell me that.—Who let them out of the stable?'

'Perhaps they let themselves out,'—replied Adair,—'they were not haltered.'

'You are either knave or fool, Wat. Come here—There are the tracks of the beast that carried the man up this road, who sot loose all the horses that were in that stable.'—

'Mike Lynch, perhaps,'—said Adair,—with an assumed expression of ignorance.—'Where can that fellow have been so early? Oh, I remember,—he told me last night that he was going this morning to the blacksmith's.—He ought to be back by this time.'

'And you are here to larn the news from him?'—said the sergeant, eyeing Adair with a suspicious scrutiny.

'You have just hit it, Horse Shoe,'—returned Wat, laughing. 'I did want to know if there were any more squads of troopers foraging about this district:—for these cursed fellows whip in upon a man and cut him up blade and ear, without so much as thanks for their pillage— and so I told Mike to inquire of the blacksmith,—for he

is more like to know than any body else,—whether there was any more of these pestiferous scrummagers abroad.’

‘And your traps, Wat?’—

‘That was only a lie, Galbraith—I confess it. I was afeard to make you uneasy by telling you what I was after.—But still it wasn’t a broad, stark, day-light lie neither—it was only a civil fib;—for I was going after my wolf trap before I got my breakfast.—But, here comes Mike!’—

At this juncture, Lynch was seen emerging from the wood, mounted on a rough, untrimmed pony that he was urging forward under repeated blows with his stick. The little animal was covered with foam; and, from his travel-worn plight, gave evidence of having been taxed to the utmost of his strength in a severe journey. At some hundred paces distant, the rider detected the presence of Adair and his companion, and came to a sudden halt. He appeared to deliberate as if with a purpose to escape their notice; but finding that he was already observed by them, he put his horse again in motion, advancing only at a slow walk. Adair hastily quitted Robinson, and, walking forward until he met Lynch, turned about and accompanied him along the road—conversing during this interval in a key too low to be heard by the sergeant.

‘Here’s Horse Shoe, thrusting his head into our affairs. Conjure a lie quickly about your being at the blacksmith’s—I told him you were there, to hear the news.’—

‘Aye, aye!—I understand’—

‘You saw Hugh?’—

‘Yes.—The gang will be at their post.’

‘Hush?—Be merry—laugh and have a joke—Horse Shoe is very suspicious.’

‘You have ridden the crop-ear like a stolen horse,’—continued Adair, as soon as he found himself within the sergeant’s hearing.—‘See what a flurry you have put the dumb beast in. If it had been your own nag, Mike Lynch, I warrant you would have been more tedious with him.’—

‘The crop-ear is not worth the devil’s fetching, Wat. He is as lazy as a land-turtle, and too obstinate for any

good-tempered man's patience. Look at that stick.—I have split it into a broom on the beast.'—

'You look more like a man at the end of the day, than at the beginning of it,'—said Robinson.—'How far had you to ride, Michael?'

'Only over here to the shop of Billy Watson, in the Buzzard's nest,'—replied Lynch,—'which isn't above three miles at the farthest.—My saw wanted setting, so, I thought I'd make an early job of it:—but this beast is so cursed dull—I have been good three-quarters of an hour since I left the smith's.'—

'What news do you bring?'—inquired Adair.

'Oh, none worth telling again.—That cross-grained, contrary, rough-and-tumble bear gouger, old Hide-and-Seek, went down yesterday with the last squad of Ferguson's new draughts.'—

'Wild Tom Eskridge,'—said Wat Adair.—'You knowed him Horse Shoe—a superfluous imp of Satan?'—continued the woodman, laying a particular accent on the penultimate of this favourite adjective which he was accustomed to use, as expressive of strong reprobation.—'So he is cleared out at last! Well, I'm glad on't—for he was the only fellow in these hills I was afeard would give you trouble, Galbraith.'

'Superfluous or not,'—replied the sergeant, pronouncing the word in the same manner as the woodman, and equally ignorant of its meaning—'it will be a bad day for Tom Eskridge—the rank obstropolous Tory—when he meets me, Wat Adair. I have reason to think that he tried to clap some of Tarleton's dragoons on my back over here at the Waxhaws. There's hemp growing for that scape-grace at this very time.'

'You heard of no red coats about the Tiger?'—asked Adair.

'Not one,'—replied Lynch,—'the nearest post is Cruger's, in Ninety-Six.'—

'Then your way, Mr. Robinson, is tolerable for to-day,'—added Adair:—'but war is war, and there is always some risk to be run when men are parading with their rifles in their hands.—But see—it is hard upon sun rise. Let us go and give some directions about breakfast. I

will send out some of the boys to hunt up the horses—they will be ready by the time we have had something to eat.'

Without further delay, Adair strode rapidly up the hill to the dwelling house, the sergeant and Lynch following as soon as the latter had put his jaded beast in the stable. By the time these were assembled in the porch the family began to show signs of life, and it was a little after sun rise when Butler came forth ready for the prosecution of his journey. A few words were exchanged in private between Lynch and the woodman, and after much idle talk and contrived delay, two lazy and loitering negro boys were sent off in quest of the travellers' horses. Not long after this the animals were seen coursing from one part of the distant field to another, defying all attempts to get them into a corner, or to compel them to pass through the place that had been opened in order to drive them towards the stable.

There was an air of concern and silent bewilderment visible upon Butler's features; and an occasional expression of impatience escaped his lips as he watched from the porch the ineffectual efforts of the negroes to force the truant steeds towards the house.

'All in good time,'—said Adair, answering the thoughts and looks of Butler, rather than his words.—'All in good time: they must have their play out. It is a good sign, sir, to see a traveller's horse so capersome of a morning. Wife, make haste with your preparations; Horse Shoe and his friend here mustn't be kept back from their day's journey. Stir yourself, Mary Musgrove!'

'Will the gentlemen stay for breakfast?'—inquired Mary with a doubtful look at Butler.

'Will they?—To be sure they will! Would you turn off friends from the door with empty stomachs, you mink,—and, especially, with a whole day's starvation ahead of them?'—exclaimed the woodman.

'I thought they had far to ride,'—replied the girl,—'and would choose, rather than wait, to take some cold provision to eat upon the road.'

'Tush! Go about your business, neice. The horses

are not caught yet, and you may have your bacon fried before they are at the door.'—

'It shall be ready, then, in a moment,'—returned Mary; and she betook herself diligently to her task of preparation. During the interval that followed, the maiden several times attempted to gain a moment's speech with Butler, but the presence of Adair or Lynch as frequently forbade even a whisper; and the morning meal was at length set smoking on the table without the arrival of the desired opportunity. The repast was speedily finished, and the horses having surrendered to the emissaries who had been despatched to bring them in, were now in waiting for their masters. Horse Shoe put into the woodman's hand a small sum of money in requital for the entertainment afforded to his comrade and himself, and having arranged their baggage upon the saddles, announced that they were ready to set forward on their journey. Whilst the travellers were passing the farewells customary on such occasions, Mary Musgrove, whose manner during the whole morning gave many indications of a painful secret concern, now threw herself in Butler's way, and as she modestly offered him her hand at parting, and heard the little effusion of gallantry and compliment with which it was natural for a well-bred man, and a soldier to speak at such a moment, she took the opportunity to whisper,—'the left hand road at the Fork—remember!'—and instantly glided away to another part of the house. Butler paused but for an instant, and then hurried forward with the sergeant to their horses.

'Wat, you promised to put us on the track to Grindall's Ford,'—said Horse Shoe, as he rose into his seat.

'I am ready to go part of the way with you,'—replied the woodman,—'I will see you to the Fork, and after that you must make out for yourselves. Michael, fetch me my rifle.'

It was not more than half past six when the party set forth on their journey. Our two travellers rode along at an easy gait, and Wat Adair, throwing his rifle carelessly across his shoulder, stepped out with a long swinging

step that kept him, without difficulty, abreast of the horsemen as they pursued their way over hill and dale.

They had not journeyed half a mile before they reached a point in the woods, at which Adair called a halt.—

‘My trap is but a little off the road,’—he said,—‘and I must beg you to stop until I see what luck I have this morning. It’s a short business and soon done. This way, Horse Shoe—it is likely I may give you sport this morning.’

‘Our time is pressing,’—said Butler. ‘Pray give us your directions as to the road, and we will leave you.’

‘You would never find it in these woods,’—replied Wat;—‘there are two or three paths leading through here, and the road is a blind one till you come to the Fork—the trap is not a hundred yards out of your way.’

‘Rather than stop to talk about it, Wat,’—said the sergeant,—‘we will follow you—so go on.’

The woodman now turned into the thicket, and opening his way through the bushes, in a few moments conducted the two soldiers to the foot of a large gum tree.

‘By all the crows, I have got my lady!’—exclaimed Wat Adair, with a whoop that made the woods ring.—‘The saucy slut!—I have yoked her, Horse Shoe Robinson! There’s a picture worth looking at.’—

‘Who?’—cried Butler,—‘of whom are you speaking?’—

‘Look for yourself, sir,’—replied the woodman. ‘There’s the mischievous devil—an old she-wolf that I have been hunting these two years. Oh ho, madam!—Your servant!’—

Upon looking near the earth, our travellers descried the object of this triumphant burst of joy, in a large wolf that was now struggling to release herself from the thralldom of her position. The trap was ingeniously contrived. It consisted of a long opening into the hollow trunk of the tree, beginning about four feet from the ground, and cut out with an axe down to the root. An aperture had been made at the upper end of the slit about a foot wide, and the wood had been hewed away downwards, in such a manner as to render the slit gradually narrower as it approached the lower extremity, until near the earth it was not more than four inches in width—thus forming a

wedge-shaped loop-hole into the hollow body of the tree. A part of the carcase of a sheep had been placed on the bottom inside, the scent of which had attracted the wolf, and, in her eagerness to possess herself of this treasure, she had risen on her hind legs high enough to find a part of the opening sufficiently wide to allow her head to be thrust in, whence slipping downward, the slit became so narrow as to prevent her from withdrawing her jaws. The only mode of extrication from this trap would have been by again rearing her body to the same height at which she found admission—an expedient which, it seems, required more cunning than this proverbially cunning animal was gifted with. She now stood captive pretty much in the same manner that oxen are commonly secured in their stalls.

For a few moments after the prisoner was first perceived, and during the extravagant yelling of Adair at the success of his stratagem, she made several desperate but ineffectual efforts to withdraw her head; but as soon as Butler and Robinson had dismounted and, together with their guide, had assembled around her, she desisted from her struggles and seemed patiently to resign herself to the will of her captor. She stood perfectly still with that passive and even cowardly submission for which, in such circumstances, this animal is remarkable: her hind legs drooped and her tail was thrust between them, whilst not a snarl nor an expression of anger or grief escaped her. Her characteristic sagacity had been completely baffled by the superior, though scarcely less wolfish, cunning of her ensnarer.

Wat laughed aloud with a coarse and almost fiendish laugh, as he cried out—

‘I have cotch the old thief at last, in spite of her cunning! With a warning to boot.—Here is a mark I sot upon her last wiinter,’—he added as he raised her fore-leg which was deprived of the foot,—‘but she would be prowling—the superfluous devil! It is in the nature of these here blood-suckers, to keep a going at their trade, no matter how much they are watched. But I knowed I’d have her one of these days. These varmints have always got to pay, one day or another, for their villanies.

Wa'n't she an old fool, Horse Shoe, to walk into this here gum for a piece of dead mutton? Ha, ha, ha!—if she had had only the sense to rear up, she might have had the laugh on us!—But she hadn't—ha, ha, ha!—

'Well, Wat Adair,'—said Robinson,—'you had a mischievous head when you contrived that trap.'—

'Feel her ribs—Mr. Butler,'—cried Wat, not heeding the sergeant,—'I know who packed that flesh on her. There isn't a lamb in my flock to-day, that wouldn't grin if he was to hear the news.'

'Well, what are you going to do with her Adair?'—inquired Butler.—'Remember, we are losing time here.'

'Do with her!'—ejaculated the woodman,—'that's soon told:—I will skin the devil alive.'

'I hope not,'—exclaimed Butler. 'It would be an unnecessary cruelty. Despatch her on the spot with your rifle.'

'I wouldn't waste powder and ball on the varmint,'—replied Adair.—'No, no, the knife—the knife!'

'Then cut her throat and be done with it.'

'You are not used to these hellish thieves, sir,'—said the woodman.—'There is nothing that isn't too good for them.—By the old sinner!—I'll skin her alive.—That's the sentence!'

'Once more, I pray not,'—said Butler imploringly—

'It is past praying for,'—returned Adair, as he drew forth his knife and began to whet it on a stone.—'She shall die by inches—and be damned to her!'—he added, as his eye sparkled with savage delight.—'Now look and see a wolf punished according to her evil doings.'

The woodman stood over his captive and laughed heartily, as he pointed out to his companions the quailing and subdued gestures of his victim, indulging in coarse and vulgar jests whilst he described minutely the plan of torture he was about to execute. When he had done with his ribaldry, he slowly drew the point of his knife down the back bone of the animal, from the neck to the tail, sundering the skin along the whole length.—'That's the way to unbutton her jacket,'—he said, laughing louder than ever.—

‘For God’s sake, desist!’—ejaculated Butler.—‘For my sake, save the poor animal from this pain! I will pay you thrice the value of the skin.’

‘Money will not buy her,’—said Wat, looking up for an instant.—‘Besides, the skin is spoiled by that gash.’

‘Here are two guineas, if you will cut her throat,’—said Butler,—‘and destroy her at once.’

‘That would be murder outright,’—replied Adair,—‘I never take money to do murder—it goes agin my conscience. No, no, I will undress the old lady, and let her have the benefit of the cool air in this hot weather. And if she should take cold, you know, and fall sick and die of that—why then, Mr. Butler, you can give me the two guineas. That will save my conscience,’—he added with a grin that expressed a struggle between his avarice and cruelty.—

‘Come, Galbraith,—I will not stay to witness the barbarity of this savage. Mount your horse, and let us take our chance alone through the woods. Fellow,—I do not wish your further service.’

‘Look there now!’—said Adair—‘where were you born, that you are so mighty nice upon account of a blood-sucking wolf?—Man, its impossible to find your way through this country,—and you might, by taking a wrong road, fall in with them that would think nothing of serving you as I serve this beast.’

‘Wat, curse your onnatural heart,’—interposed the sergeant.—‘Stob her at once.—It’s no use Mr. Butler,’—he said, finding that Adair did not heed him,—‘we can’t help ourselves.—It’s wolf agin wolf.’

‘I knowed you couldn’t Horse Shoe,’—cried Wat, with another laugh.—‘So you may as well stay to see it out.’

Butler had now walked to his horse, mounted and retired some distance into the wood to avoid further converse with the tormentor of the ensnared beast, and to withdraw himself from a sight so revolting to his feelings. In the meantime, Adair proceeded with his operation with an alacrity that showed the innate cruelty of his temper. He made a cross incision through the skin, from the point of one shoulder to the other, the devoted subject of his torture remaining, all the time, motionless and

silent. Having thus severed the skin to suit his purpose, the woodman now, with an affectation of the most dainty precision, flourished his knife over the animal's back, and then burst into a loud laugh.—

'I can't help laughing,'—he exclaimed,—'to think what a fine, dangling, holiday coat I am going to make of it. I shall strip her as low as the ribs, and then the flaps will hang handsomely. She will be considered a beauty in the sheep-folds—and then, she may borrow a coat, you see, from some lamb:—a wolf in sheep's clothing is no uncommon sight in this world.'

'Wat Adair,'—said Horse Shoe, angrily,—'I've a mind to take the wolf's part and give you a trouncing.—You are the savagest wolf in sheep's clothing yourself that it was ever my luck to see.'

'You think so, Horse Shoe?'—cried Wat, tauntingly.—'You might chance to miss your way to-day—so don't make a fool of yourself! Ill will would only take away from you a finger post—and it isn't every road through this district that goes free of the Tory rangers.'

'Your own day will come yet,'—replied Horse Shoe, afraid to provoke the woodman too far, on account of the dependence of himself and his companion upon Adair's information in regard to the route of their journey.—'We have to give and take quarter in this world.'

'You see, Horse Shoe,'—said Adair, beginning to expostulate,—'I don't like these varmints, no how:—that's the reason why. They are cruel themselves—and I like to be cruel to them. It's a downright pleasure to see them winch—for, bless your soul! they don't mind common throat-cutting, no more than a calf.—Now here's the way to touch their feelings.'

And at this moment he applied the point of his knife to separating the hide from the flesh on either side of the spine, and then, in his eagerness to accomplish this object, he placed his knife between his teeth and began to tug at the skin with his hands, accompanying the effort with muttered expressions of delight at the involuntary and but ill-suppressed agonies of the brute.—The pain, at length, became too acute for the wolf, with all her characteristic habits of submission, to bear, and, in a desperate strug-

gle that ensued between her and her tormenter, she succeeded, by a convulsive leap, in extricating herself from her place of durance.—The energy of her effort of deliverance rescued her from the woodman's hand, and turning short upon her assailant, she fixed her fangs deep into the fleshy part of his thigh, where, as the foam fell from her lips, she held on firmly as if determined to sell her life dearly for the pain she suffered. Adair uttered a groan from the infliction, and, in the hurry of the instant, dropped his knife upon the ground. He was thus compelled to bear the torment of the grip, until he dragged the still pertinaciously-adhering beast a few paces forward, where, grasping up his knife, he planted it, by one deeply driven blow, through and through her heart. She silently fell at his feet, without snarl or bark,—releasing her hold only in the impotency of death.

‘Curse her!’—cried Adair,—‘the hard hearted, bloody minded devil! That’s the nature of the beast,—cruel and wicked to the last:—damn her’—he continued, raving with pain, as he stamped his heel upon her head,—‘damn her, in the wolf’s hell to which she has gone!’

Robinson stood by, unaiding and not displeased to see the summary vengeance thus inflicted by the victim upon the oppressor. This calmness provoked the woodman, who, with that stoicism that belongs to uncivilized life, seemed determined to take away all pretext for the sergeant’s exultation, by affecting to make light of the injury he had received.

‘I don’t mind the scratch of the cursed creature,’—he said, assuming a badly counterfeited expression of mirth,—‘but I don’t like to be cheated out of the pleasure of tormenting such mischievous varmints. It’s well for her that she put me in a passion, or she should have carried a festered carcase that the buzzards might have fed upon before she died.—But come,—where is Mr. Butler?—I want them two guineas.—Ho sir,’—he continued bawling to Butler, as he tied up his wound with a strap of buckskin taken from his pouch,—‘my two guineas.—I’ve killed the devil to please you—seeing you would have it.’

Butler now rode up to the spot, and, in answer to this appeal, gave it an angry and indignant refusal. ‘Lead us

on our way, sir,'—he added.—'We have lost too much time already with your brutal delay. Lead on sir!'

'You will get soon enough to your journey's end,'—replied Adair, with an ambiguous smile—and then sullenly took up his rifle and led the way through the forest.

A full half hour or more was lost by the incident at the trap, and Butler's impatience and displeasure continued to be manifested by the manner with which he urged the woodman forward upon their journey. After regaining the road, and traversing a piece of intricate and tangled woodland, by a bridle-path into which their guide had conducted them, they soon reached a broader and more beaten highway, along which they rode scarce a mile before they arrived at the Fork.

'I have seen you safe, as far as I promised,'—said the woodman,—'and you must now shift for yourselves. You take the right hand road:—about ten miles further, you will come to another prong,—there strike to the left,—and, if you have luck you will get to the ford before sundown. Three miles further is Christie's.—Good bye, t'ye!—And, Horse Shoe,—if you should come across another wolf stuck in a tree,—skin her;—d'ye hear? Ha, ha, ha!—Good bye!'

'Ride on!'—said Butler to the sergeant, who was about making some reply to Adair—'ride on!—Don't heed or answer that fellow, but take the road he directs.—He is a beast and scoundrel.—Faster, good sergeant—faster!'

As he spoke he set his horse to a gallop. Robinson followed at equal speed,—the woodman standing still until the travellers disappeared from his view behind the thick foliage that overhung their path. Having seen them thus secure in his toil, the treacherous guide turned upon his heel, shouldered his rifle, and limped back to his dwelling.

'I have a strange misgiving of that ruffian, sergeant,'—said Butler, after they had proceeded about a quarter of a mile.—'My mind is perplexed with some unpleasant doubts. What is your opinion of him?'

'He plays on both sides,'—replied Horse Shoe,—'and knows more of you than, by rights, he ought. He spoke

consarning of you, this morning, as *Major Butler*. It came out of his mouth onawares.’—

‘Ha! Is my name on any part of my baggage, or dress?’

‘Not that I know of,’—replied the sergeant,—‘and if it was, Wat can’t read.’—

‘Were you interrupted in your sleep last night, Galbraith?—Did you hear noises in our room?’—

Nothing, major, louder nor the gnawing of a mouse at the foot of the plank partition.—Did you see a spirit that you look so solemn?’—

‘By G— I did then, sergeant!’—said Butler, with great earnestness of manner.—‘I had a dream that had something more than natural in it.’—

‘You amaze me, major!—If you saw any thing, why didn’t you awake me?’—

‘I hadn’t time before it was gone; and then it was too late.—I dreamt, Galbraith, that somehow—for my dream didn’t explain how she came in—Mary Musgrove,—the young girl we saw’—

‘Ha, ha, ha!—major, that young girl’s oversot you!—Was that the spirit?’—

‘Peace, Galbraith, I am in earnest;—listen to me. I dreamt Mary Musgrove came into our room and warned us that our lives were in danger,—how, I forget, or perhaps she did not tell;—but she spoke of our being waylaid, and, I think, she advised that at this very fork of the road we have just passed, we should take the left hand:—the right, according to my dream, she said, led to some spring.’—

• ‘Perhaps the Dogwood, major,’—said Robinson laughing,—‘there is such a place, somewhere in these parts.’—

‘The Dogwood—by my life!’—exclaimed Butler,—‘she called it the Dogwood spring.’

‘That’s very strange,’—said Robinson gravely,—‘that’s very strange,—unless you have hearn some one talk about the spring before you went to bed last night. For, as sure as you are a gentleman, there is such a spring not far off—although I don’t know exactly where.’

‘And what perplexes me,’—continued Butler,—‘is that, this morning, almost in the very words of my dream,

Mary Musgrove cautioned me, in a whisper, to take the left road at the fork. How is she connected with my dream?—Or could it have been a reality—and was it the girl herself that spoke? I have no recollection of such a word from her before I retired to bed.’—

‘I have heard of these sorts of things before, major, and never could make them out. For my share, I believe in dreams.—There is something wrong here,’—continued the sergeant, after pondering over the matter for a few moments, and shaking his head,—‘there is something wrong here, major Butler, as sure as you are born.—I wasn’t idle in making my own observations:—first, I didn’t like the crossness of Wat’s wife last night;—then, the granny there,—she raved more like an old witch, with something wicked in her that wouldn’t let her be still, than like your decent old bodies when they get childish. What did she mean by her palaver about golden guineas in Wat’s pocket—and the English officer?—such notions don’t come naturally into the head, without something to go upon. And, moreover, when I turned out this morning, before it was cleverly day, who do you think I saw?’

‘Indeed I cannot guess.’—

‘First, Wat walking up the road with a face like a man that had sot a house on fire; and when I stopped him to ax what he was after, down comes Mike Lynch,—that peevish bull-dog—from the woods, on a little knot of a pony, pretty nigh at full speed, and covered with lather;—and there was a sort of colloquing together,—and then a story made up about Mike’s being at Billy Watson’s, the blacksmith’s.—It didn’t tell well, major;—and it sot me to suspicions. The gray of the morning is not the time for blacksmith’s work:—there’s the fire to make up, and what not. Besides, it don’t belong to the trade, as I know, here in the country, to be at work so arly.—I said nothing; but I made a sort of reckoning in my own mind that they looked like a couple of desarters trying to sham a sentry. Then again, there was our horses turned loose. There is something in these signs, you may depend upon it, major Butler!’

‘That fellow has designs against us, Galbraith,’—said Butler, musing, and paying but little attention to the sur-

mises of the sergeant,—‘I can hardly think it was a dream. It may have been Mary Musgrove herself—but how she got there, is past my conjecture.—I saw nothing—I only heard the warning. And I would be sworn she addressed me as major Butler.—You say Wat Adair gave me the same title?’

‘As I am a living man,’—replied Horse Shoe.—‘He wanted to deny it,—and then he pretended it was a fancy of his own.’—

‘It is very strange, and looks badly,’—said Butler.

‘Never mind,—let the worst come to the worst, we have arms and legs both,’—returned the sergeant.—

‘I will take the hint for good or for ill,’—said the major.—‘Sergeant, strike across into the left hand road;—in this I will move no farther.’

‘That’s as wise a thing as we can do,’—replied Robinson.—‘If you have doubts of a man, seem to trust him, but take care not to follow his advice. There is another hint I will give you—let us examine our fire-arms to see that we are ready for a battle.’

Butler concurring in this precaution, the sergeant dismounted, and having primed his rifle afresh, attempted to fire it into the air, but it merely flashed, without going off. Upon a second trial the result was the same. This induced a further examination, which disclosed the fact that the load which had been put in the day previous had been discharged, and a bullet was now driven home in the place of the powder. It was obvious that this was designed. The machination of an enemy became more apparent when, upon an investigation into the condition of Butler’s pistols, they were also found incapable of being used.—

‘This is some of Michael Lynch’s doings whilst we were eating our breakfast,’—said Horse Shoe,—‘and it is flat proof of treason in our camp. I should like to go back if it was only for the satisfaction of blowing out Wat’s brains.—But there is no use in argufying about it.—We must set things to rights, and move on with a good look-out ahead.’—

With the utmost apparent indifference to the dangers that beset them, the sergeant now applied himself to the

care of restoring his rifle to a serviceable condition. With the aid of a small tool which he carried for such a use, he opened the breach and removed the ball: Butler's pistols were likewise put in order, and our travellers, being thus restored to an attitude of defence, turned their horses' heads into the thicket upon their left, and proceeded across the space that filled up the angle made by the two branches of the road; and, having gained that branch which they sought, they pressed forward diligently upon their journey.

The path they had to travel was lonely and rugged, and it was but once or twice, during the day, that they met a casual wayfarer traversing the same wild. From such a source, however, they were informed that they were on the most direct road to Grindall's ford, and that the route they had abandoned would have conducted them to the Dogwood spring,—a point much out of their proper course, and from which the ford might only have been reached by a difficult and tortuous by-way.

These disclosures opened the eyes of Butler and his companion to the imminent perils that encompassed them, and prompted them to the exercise of the strictest circumspection and vigilance. Like discreet and trusty soldiers, they pursued their way with the most unwavering courage, confident that the difficulty of retreat was fully equal to that of the advance.

CHAPTER XVI.

TORY TROOPERS, A DARK ROAD AND A FRAY.

'By the whiskers of the Grand Turk, I have got the four points on you, bully Buff!—High, low, jack and the game!'—exclaimed Peppercorn.

'You have luck enough to worry out the nine lives of a cat.—That's an end to Backbiter—the best horse 'twixt Pedee and the Savannah.—So, blast me, if I play any more with you!—There, send the cards to hell!'—roared out Hugh Habershaw, rising and throwing the pack into the fire.

It was just at the closing in of night, when a party of ruffianly-looking fellows were assembled beneath a spreading chestnut, that threw forth its aged arms over a small gravelly hillock, in the depths of the forest that skirted the northern bank of the Pacolet, within a short distance of Grindall's ford. The spot had all the qualities of a secret fastness. It was guarded on one side by the small river, and on the other by a complicated screen of underwood, consisting principally of those luxuriantly platted vines which give so distinct a character to the southern woodland. The shrubbery, immediately along the bank of the river, was sufficiently open to enable a horseman to ride through it down to the road which, at about two hundred paces off, led into the ford.

The group, who now occupied this spot, consisted of some ten or twelve men under the command of Hugh Habershaw. Their appearance was half rustic and half military; some efforts at soldierly costume were visible in the decoration of an occasional buck-tail set in the caps of several of the party, and, here and there, a piece of yellow cloth forming a band for the hat. Some wore long and ungainly deer-skin pantaloons and moccasins of the same material; and two or three were indued with coats of coarse homespun, awkwardly garnished with the trimmings of a British uniform. All were armed—but in the same irregular fashion. There were rifles to be seen stacked against the trunk of the tree: most of the men wore swords, which were of different lengths and sizes; and some of the gang had a horseman's pistol bestowed conspicuously about their persons. Their horses were attached to the drooping ends of the boughs of the several trees that hemmed in the circle, and were ready for service at the first call. A small fire of brush-wood had been kindled near the foot of the chestnut, and its blaze was sufficiently strong to throw a bright glare over the motley and ill-looking crew who were assembled near it. They might well have been taken for a bivouac of banditti of the most undisciplined and savage class. A small party were broiling venison at the fire: the greater number, however, were stretched out upon the ground in idleness, waiting for some expected summons

to action. The two that I have first noticed, were seated on the butt-end of a fallen trunk, immediately within the light of the fire, and were engaged with a pack of dirty cards, at the then popular game of 'all fours.'

These two personages were altogether different in exterior from each other. The first of them, known only by the soubriquet of Peppercorn, was a tall, well-proportioned and active man, neatly dressed in the uniform of a British dragoon. His countenance indicated more intelligence than belonged to his companions, and his manners had the flexible, bold and careless port that generally distinguishes a man who has served much in the army, and become familiar with the varieties of character afforded by such a career. The second was Hugh Habershaw, the captain of the gang. He was a bluff, red-visaged, corpulent man, with a face of gross, unmitigated sensuality. A pale blood-shot eye which was expressionless, except in a sinister glance occasioned by a partial squint, a small upturned nose, a mouth with thin and compressed lips inclining slightly downwards at the corners, a double chin bristling with a wiry and almost white beard, a low forehead, a bald crown and meagre, reddish whiskers, were the ill-favoured traits of his physiognomy. The figure of this worthy was as uncouth as his countenance. He was rather below the middle height, and appeared still shorter by the stoop of his massive round shoulders, by the ample bulk of his chest, and by the rotundity of his corporation. In consideration of his rank, as the leader of this vagabond squadron, he aimed at more military ornament in his dress than his comrades. A greasy cocked hat, decorated after the fashion described by Grumio, 'with the humour of forty fancies pricked in it for a feather,' was perched somewhat superciliously upon his poll, and his body was invested in an old and much abused cloth coat of London brown,—as it was then called,—to the ample shoulders of which had been attached two long, narrow and threadbare epaulets of tarnished silver lace. A broad buckskin belt was girded, by the help of a large brass buckle, around his middle, on the outside of his coat; and it served as well to suspend a rusty sabre, as to furnish support to a hunting knife,

which was thrust into it in front. His nether person was rendered conspicuous by a pair of dingy small-clothes, and long black boots.—Close at the feet of this redoubtable commander lay a fat, surly bull-dog, whose cross and snarlish temper seemed to have been fostered and promoted by the peremptory perverseness with which his master claimed for him all the privileges and indulgences of a pampered favourite.

Such were the unattractive exterior and circumstances of the man who assumed control over the band of rufians now assembled.

‘I wish you and the cards had been broiled on the devil’s gridiron before I ever saw you!’—continued Havershaw, after he had consigned the pack to the flames. ‘That such a noble beast as Backbiter should be whipped out of my hand by the turn of a rascally card! Hark’ee, you imp of Satan, you have the knack of winning!—your luck, or something else—you understand me,—something else, would win the shirt off my back if I was such a fool as to play longer with you.—I suspect you are a light-fingered Jack—a light-fingered Jack—d’ye hear that, Master Peppercorn?’—

‘How now, Bully!’—cried Peppercorn:—‘Are you turning boy in your old days, that you must fall to whining because you have lost your peg top?—Is every man a rogue since you have set up the trade? For shame! If I were as hot a fool as you, I would give you steel in your guts. But come, noble captain, there’s my hand. This is no time for us to be hatching quarrels,—we have other business cut out. As to Backbiter—the rat-tailed and spavined bone setter!—curse me if I would have him as a gift:—a noble beast! ha, ha, ha! Take him back man,—take him back!—he wasn’t worth the cards that won him.’

‘Silence, you tailor’s bastard! Would you breed a mutiny in the camp? Look around you: do you expect me to preserve discipline amongst these wild wood-scourers, with your loud haw haws to my very teeth?—You make too free, Peppercorn,—you make too free! It wouldn’t take much to make me strike—damn me, there’s fighting blood in me, and you know it.—When I am at

the head of my men, you must know your distance, sir. Suffice it—I don't approve of this familiarity to the commander of a squad.—But it is no matter: I let it pass this time. And, hark in your ear—as you underrate Back-biter—you are a fool, Peppercorn, and know no more of the points of a good horse than you do of the ten commandments—why, blast you, just to punish you, I'll hold you to the word of a gentleman, and take him back.—Now there's an end of it, and let's have no more talking.'

'Right, noble Captain!'—ejaculated Peppercorn, with a free and swaggering laugh.—'Right!—I will uphold the discipline of the valiant captain Hugh Habershaw of the Tiger against all the babblers the world over. By the God of war, I marvel that Cruger hasn't forced upon you one of his commissions, before this!—the army would be proud of such a master of tactics.'

'The time will come, Peppercorn,—the time will come, and then I'll teach them the elements of military construction.—Mark that word, Peppercorn,—there's meaning in it.'—

'Huzza for captain Tiger of Habershaw—Habershaw of Tiger, I mean!'—cried Peppercorn. 'Here's Tiger Habershaw, my boys! Drink to that.' And saying these words, the dragoon snatched up a leathern canteen from the ground, and, pouring out some spirits into the cup, drank them off.

The rest of the crew sprang from the grass, and followed the example set them by their comrade, roaring out the pledge until the woods rang with their vociferation.

'Peace, you rascallions!' screamed the captain.—'Have you so little notion where you are, that you bellow like bulls? Is this your discipline, when you should be as silent as cats in a kitchen—hell hounds!—And you, you coarse-throated devil, Beauty,'—he said as he kicked his dog, that had contributed to the chorus with a loud sympathetic howl,—'you must be breaking the laws of service guard with your infernal roar, like the other fools of the pack.—Be still—puppy!'—

The clamour, upon this rebuke, ceased, and the bulldog crouched again at his master's feet.

'Isn't it time that we were at the ford?—Ough'n't our friends to be near at hand?'—inquired Peppercorn.

'Black Jack will give us notice,'—replied Habershaw.—'Depend upon him.—I have thought of every thing like a man that knows his business. I have sent that rascal up the road, with orders to feel the enemy,—and I'll undertake he'll clink it back when he once lays eyes on them, as fast as four legs will carry him.—But it is always well to be before hand, Peppercorn.—Learn that from me: I never in my campaigns knowed any harm done by being too early.—So, Master Orderly, call the roll.'

'Ready, sir—always ready when you command,'—answered Peppercorn. 'Shall I call the ragamuffins by their nicknames, or will you have them handled like christians.'

'On secret service,'—said Habershaw,—'it is always best to use them to their nicknames.'—

'As when they go horse-stealing, or house-burning, or throat-cutting,'—interrupted Peppercorn.

'Order sir,—no undecencies!—do you hear?—Go on with your roll—if you have got it by heart. Be musical—dog!'

'Faith will I, most consummate captain! It is just to my hand: I'll sing you like a bag-pipe. I have learnt the roll-call handsomely, and can go through it, as if it were a song.'

'Begin then:—the time is coming when we must move. I think I hear Black Jack's horse breaking through the bushes now.'

'Attention, you devil's babies—the whole of you!' shouted Peppercorn.—'Horse and gun—every mother's imp of you!'

In a moment the idlers sprang to their weapons and mounted their horses.

'Answer to your names,'—said the orderly,—'and see that you do it discreetly.—Pimple!'

'Here,'—answered one of the disorderly crew, with a laugh.

'Silence in the ranks,'—cried Habershaw,—'or, by the

Blood of your bodies, I'll make my whinger acquainted with your hearts!"—

'Long Shanks.'

'Here—if you mean me,'—said another.

'Good.—Black Jack.'

'On patrol,'—said the captain.

'Red Mug.'

'At the book!'—answered the man in the ranks; and here rose another laugh.

'Red Mug—do you mind me?'—said Habershaw in a threatening tone, as his eye squinted fiercely towards the person addressed.

'Platter Breech.'—

'I'll stand out against the nick name,'—said the person intended to be designated, whilst the whole squad began to give symptoms of a mutiny of merriment,—'I'll be d—d if I will have it—and that's as good as if I swore to it. I am not going to be cajoled at by the whole company.'

'Silence.—Blood and butter, you villians!'—roared the captain.—'Don't you see that you're in line? How often have I told you that its against discipline to chirp above a whisper when you are drawn out?—Take care that I hav'n't to remind you of that again! • Andy Clopper, you will keep the denomination I have set upon you. Platter Breech is a good soldier-like name—and you shall die in it, if I bid you. Go on, Orderly,—proceed.'

'Marrow Bone.'—

'Here.'

'Fire-Nose.'

'Fire-Nose, yourself, Mister Disorderly!'—replied another refractory member, sullenly from the ranks.

'Well, let him pass. That's a cross-grained devil,'—said the captain, aside to Peppercorn.—'I'll bring that chap into order yet—the d—d mutineering back-hanger. Pass him.'

'Screech Owl.'

'Here.'

'That's a decent, good natured, Screech Owl,'—said Peppercorn.—'Clapper Claw!—Bow Legs.'—

VOL. I.

18*

‘Both here.’—

‘They are all here, most comfortable captain,—all good fellows and true, and as ready to follow you into the belly of an earthquake as go to supper—it is all the same to them.’

‘Let them follow where I lead, Peppercorn,—that is all I ask,’—said Habershaw significantly.

‘You have forgot one name on your roll, Mister Orderly,’—said he who had been written down by the name of Fire-Nose:

‘Whose was that?’

‘You forgot captain Moonface Bragger—captain of the squad.’

‘Gideon Blake’—shouted Habershaw, with a voice choked by anger, until it resembled the growl of a mastiff—whilst, at the same time, he drew his sword half out of the scabbard.—‘Howsever—it is very well,’—he said, restraining his wrath and permitting the blade to drop back into its sheath.—‘Another time, sir. I have marked you, you limb of a traitor. May all the devils ride over me, if I don’t drive a bullet through your brain, if you ever unfringe my discipline again! Yes, you foul-mouthed half whig—I have had my suspicions of you before to-day. So look to yourself. A fine state of things when skunks like you can be setting up a mutiny in the service! Take care of yourself, sir,—you know me.—Now, my lads,—to business. Remember the orders I issued at the Dogwood Spring this morning. This Whig officer must be taken dead or alive,—and don’t be chicken-hearted about it.—Give him the lead—give him the lead!—As to the lusty fellow that rides with him—big Horse Shoe—have a care of him—that’s a dog that bites without barking. But be on the watch that they don’t escape you again. Since we missed them at the spring they have cost us a hard ride to head them here—so let them pay for it. See that they are well into the ford before you show yourselves.—Wait for orders from me—and if I fall by the fortune of war—for you know I am apt to be rash,—take your orders from Peppercorn. If by chance we should miss them at the river, push for Christie’s,—Wat has taken care that they shall

make for that, to-night. If any of you,—by mistake, you understand me—take their prisoners, bring them back to this spot.—Now you have heard my orders—that's enough. Keep silent and ready.—Mind your discipline.—Black Jack is long coming, Orderly:—these fellows must travel slow.'

'I hear him, now,'—replied Peppercorn.

In the next moment the scout referred to, galloped into the circle. His report was hastily made. It announced that the travellers were moving leisurely towards the ford, and that not many minutes could elapse before their arrival. Upon this intelligence, Habershaw immediately marched his troop to the road and posted them in the cover of the underwood that skirted the river, at the crossing place. Here they remained like wild beasts aware of the approach of their prey, and waiting the moment to spring upon them when it might be done with the least chance of successful resistance.

Meantime Butler and Robinson advanced at a wearied pace. The twilight had so far faded as to be only discernible on the western sky. The stars were twinkling through the leaves of the forest, and the light of the fire-fly spangled the wilderness. The road might be described, in the most open parts of the wood, for some fifty paces ahead, but where the shrubbery was more dense, it was lost in utter darkness. Our travellers, like most wayfarers towards the end of the day, rode silently along, seldom exchanging a word, and anxiously computing the distance which they had yet to traverse before they reached their appointed place of repose. A sense of danger and the necessity for vigilance, on the present occasion, made them the more silent.

'I thought I heard a wild sort of yell just now:—people laughing a great way off,'—said Robinson,—'but there's such a hooting of owls and piping of frogs that I mought have been mistaken.—Halt, major. Let me listen:—there it is again.'—

'It is the crying of a panther, sergeant,—more than a mile from us, by my ear.'

'It is mightily like the scream of drunken men,'—replied

the sergeant,—‘and there, too;—I thought I heard the clatter of a hoof.’—

The travellers again reined up and listened.

‘It is more like a deer stalking through the bushes, Galbraith.’—

‘No,’—exclaimed the sergeant,—‘that’s the gallop of a horse making down the road ahead of us,—as sure as you are alive,—I heard the shoe strike a stone. You must have heard it too.’

‘I wouldn’t be sure,’—answered Butler.

‘Look to your pistols, major, and prime afresh.’—

‘We seem to have ridden a great way,’—said Butler, as he concluded the inspection of his pistols and now held one of them ready in his hand. ‘Can we have lost ourselves?—Should we not have reached the Pacolet before this?’—

‘I have seen no road that could take us astray,’—replied Robinson,—‘and, by what we were told just before sun-down, I should guess that we couldn’t be far off the ford. We hav’n’t then quite three miles to Christie’s. Well, courage, major!—supper and bed were never spoiled by the trouble of getting to them.’

‘Wat Adair, I think, directed us to Christie’s?’—said Butler.

‘He did;—and I had a mind to propose to you, since we caught him in a trick this morning, to make for some other house, if such a thing was possible,—or else to spend the night in the woods.’—

‘Perhaps it would be wise, sergeant; and if you think so still, I will be ruled by you.’

‘If we once got by the river side where our horses mought have water, I almost think I should advise a halt there.—Although I have made one observation, major Butler,—that running water is lean fare for a hungry man.—Howsever,—it won’t hurt us, and if you say the word, we will stop there.’

‘Then, sergeant, I do say the word.’

‘Isn’t that the glimmering of a light yonder in the bushes?’—inquired Horse Shoe, as he turned his gaze in the direction of the bivouac—‘or is it these here lightning bugs that keep so busy shooting about?’

'I thought I saw the light you speak of, Galbraith:—but it has disappeared.'—

'It is there again, major;—and I hear the rushing of the river—we are near the ford. Perhaps this light comes from some cabin on the bank.'—

'God send that it should turn out so, Galbraith!—for I am very weary.'

'There is some devilment going on in these woods, major.—I saw a figure pass in front of the light through the bushes.—I would be willing to swear it was a man on horseback.—Perhaps we have, by chance, fallen on some tory muster,—or, what's not so likely, they may be friends.—I think I will ride forward and challenge.'

'Better pass unobserved, if you can, sergeant,' interrupted Butler.—'It will not do for us to run the risk of being separated.—Here we are at the river—let us cross and ride some distance; then if any one follow us, we shall be more certain of his design.'

They now cautiously advanced into the river, which, though rapid, was shallow; and having reached the middle of the stream, they halted to allow their horses water.

'Captain Peter is as thirsty as a man in a fever,'—said Horse Shoe.—'He drinks as if he was laying in for a week.—Now, major, since we are here in the river, look up the stream. Don't you see, from the image in the water, that there's a fire on the bank?—And there,—by my soul!—there are men on horseback. Look towards the light.—Spur,—and out on the other side!—Quick,—quick—they are upon us!'

At the same instant that Horse Shoe spoke, a bullet whistled close by his ear; and, in the next, six or eight men galloped into the river, from different points. This was succeeded by a sharp report of firearms from both parties, and the vigorous charge of Robinson, followed by Butler, through the array of the assailants. They gained the opposite bank, and now directed all their efforts to outrun their pursuers; but in the very crisis of their escape, Butler's horse, bounding under the prick of the spur, staggered a few paces from the river and fell dead. A bullet had lodged in a vital part and the energy

of the brave steed was spent in the effort to bear his master through the stream. Butler fell beneath the stricken animal, from whence he was unable to extricate himself. The sergeant seeing his comrade's condition, sprang from his horse and ran to his assistance, and, in the same interval, the ruffian followers gained the spot and surrounded their prisoners. An ineffectual struggle ensued over the prostrate horse and rider, in which Robinson bore down more than one of his adversaries, but was obliged, at last, to yield to the overwhelming power that pressed upon him.

'Bury your swords in both of them to the hilts,'—shouted Habershaw,—'I don't want to have that work to do to-morrow.'—

'Stand off,'—cried Gideon Blake, as two or three of the gang sprang forward to execute their captain's order,—'stand off,—the man is on his back, and he shall not be murdered in cold blood;'—and the speaker took a position near Butler, prepared to make good his resolve.—The spirit of Blake had its desired effect, and the same assailants now turned upon Robinson.—

'Hold!'—cried Peppercorn, throwing up his sword and warding off the blows that were aimed by these men at the body of the sergeant. 'Hold, you knaves!—this is my prisoner. I will deal with him to my liking. Would a dozen of you strike one man when he has surrendered? Back, ye cowards,—leave him to me.—How now, old Horse Shoe,—are you caught, with your gay master here?—Come, come, we know you both.—So yield with a good grace, lest, peradventure, I might happen to blow out your brains.'—

'Silence, fellows!—You carrion crows!'—roared Habershaw.—'Remember the discipline I taught you.—No disorder, nor confusion, but take the prisoners,—since you hav'n't the heart to strike,—take them to the rendezvous. And do it quietly, do you hear?—Secure the baggage,—and about it quickly, you hounds!'

Butler was now lifted from the ground, and, with his companion, was taken into the custody of Blake and one or two of his companions, who seemed to share in his desire to prevent the shedding of blood. The prisoners

were each mounted behind one of the troopers, and in this condition conducted across the river. The saddle and other equipments were stripped from the major's dead steed; and Robinson's horse, Captain Peter, was burdened with the load of two wounded men, whose own horses had escaped from them in the fray. In this guise the band of freebooters, with their prisoners and spoils, slowly and confusedly made their way to the appointed place of reassembling. In a few moments they were ranged beneath the chestnut, waiting for orders from their self-important and vain commander.

CHAPTER XVII.

SCENES IN THE BIVOUAC.

'Bustle, my lads,—bustle!—These are stirring times,'—exclaimed Habershaw, riding with an air of great personal consequence, into the midst of the troop, as they were gathered, still on horseback, under the chestnut.—'We have made a fine night's work of it, and, considering that we fought in the dark against men ready armed for us, this has not been such a light affair. To be sure, in point of numbers, it is a trifle, but the plan, Peppercorn,—the plan, and the despatch and the neatness of the thing!—that's what I say I am entitled to credit for. Bless your soul,—Peppercorn, these fellows were sure to fall into my trap—there was no getting off. That's the effect of my generalship, you see, Peppercorn.—Study it, boy!—We could have managed about twenty more of the filthy rebels handsomely:—but this will do,—this will do. I took, as a commanding officer ought always to do, the full responsibility of the measure—and a good share of the fight.—Did I not, Peppercorn? Wasn't I, in your opinion, about the first man in the river?'

'I'll bear witness, valiant and victorious captain,'—answered the dragoon,—'that you fired the first shot;—and I am almost willing to make oath that I saw you

within, at least, twenty paces of the enemy, exhorting your men.'

'Now lads,—wait for the word,—dismount,'—continued the captain,—'and make up your minds to pass the night where you are.—Peppercorn, the prisoners I put under your identical charge. Remember that!—keep your eyes about you.—Set a guard of four men upon them—I shall make you accountable.'—He then added in an under tone—'hold them safe until to-morrow, man,—and I promise you, you shall have no trouble in watching them after that.'

'You shall find them,'—replied Peppercorn.—

'Silence,'—interrupted the captain,—'hear my orders, and give me no reply. Now, sir, before you do any thing else, call your roll, and report your killed, wounded and missing.'

Upon this order, the dragoon directed the men, after disposing of their horses, to form a line. He then called over the squad by their real names, and immediately afterwards reported to his superior,—who, in order to preserve a proper dignified distance, had retreated some paces from the group,—the following pithy and soldier-like account:—

'Two men wounded, noble captain, in the late action,—two missing;—one horse, saddle and bridle lost;—one horse and two prisoners taken from the enemy.'

'The names of the wounded, sir?'

'Tom Dubbs and Shadrach Green;—one slightly scratched, and the other bruised by a kick from the blacksmith.'

'The missing, sir?'

'Dick Waters, commonly called Marrow Bone,—and Roger Bell, known, in your honor's list, by the name of Clapper Claw.'—

'They have skulked,'—said the captain.

'Marrow Bone is as dead as a door nail, sir,'—said the orderly with perfect indifference, and standing affectedly erect.—'He fell in the river, and the probability is that Clapper Claw keeps him company.'

'What!'—roared Habershaw,—'have the diabolical scoundrels made way with any of my good fellows? Have the precious lives of my brave soldiers been poured

out by the d—d rebels?—By my hand, they shall feel twisted rope, Peppercorn!—cold iron is too good for them.’

‘Softly, captain!’—said the orderly.—‘You don’t blame the enemy for showing fight?—We mustn’t quarrel with the chances of war.—There is not often a fray without a broken head, captain. We must deal with the prisoners according to the laws of war.’—

‘Of Tory war, Peppercorn—aye that will I!—String the dogs up to the first tree. The devil’s pets,—why didn’t they surrender when we set upon them!—To-morrow:—let them look out to-morrow.—No words, orderly—send out two files to look for the bodies, and to bring in the stray horse if they can find him. A pretty night’s work!—to lose two good pieces of stuff for a brace of black-hearted whigs!’—

The two files were detailed for the duty required, and immediately set out, on foot, towards the scene of the late fray. The rest of the troop were dismissed from the line.

‘I would venture to ask, sir,’—said Butler, addressing the captain,—‘for a cup of water: I am much hurt.’

‘Silence, and be d—d to you!’ said Habershaw gruffly,—‘silence,—and know your place, sir. You are a prisoner and a traitor to boot.’

‘Don’t you hear the gentleman say he is hurt?’—interposed Robinson.—‘It’s onnatural, and more like a beast than a man to deny a prisoner a little water.’

‘By my sword, villain, I will cleave your brain for you, if you open that rebel mouth of yours again!’

‘Pshaw, pshaw! captain Habershaw, this will never do,’—said Peppercorn;—‘men are men, and must have food and drink. Here, Gideon Blake, give me your flask of liquor and bring me some water from the river.—It is my duty, captain, to look after the prisoners.’

Gideon Blake, who was a man of less savage temper than most of his associates, obeyed this command with alacrity, and even added a few words of kindness, as he assisted in administering refreshment to the prisoners. This evidence of a gentler nature did not escape the com-

ment of the ruffian captain, who still remembered his old grudge against the trooper.—

‘Away, sir,’—he said in a peremptory and angry tone,—‘away and attend to your own duty. You are over fond of obliging these beggarly whigs.—Hark you, Peppercorn,’—he added, speaking apart to the dragoon,—‘take care how you trust this skulking vagabond:—he will take bribes from the rebels, and turn his coat whenever there is money in the way.—I have my eye upon him.’

‘If I chose to speak,’—said Gideon Blake.—

‘Hold your peace, you gray fox,’—cried the captain.—‘Not a word!—I know your doublings. Remember you are under martial law,—and blast me, if I don’t make you feel it!—There are more than myself suspect you.’—

‘I should like to know,’—said Butler,—‘why I and my companion are molested on our journey. Have we fallen amongst banditti, or do you bear a lawful commission?—If you do, sir, let me tell you, you have disgraced it by outrage and violence exercised towards unoffending men, and shall answer for it when the occasion serves. On what pretence have we been arrested?’

‘Hark, my young fighting-cock,’—replied the captain.—‘You will know your misdemeanours soon enough. And if you would sleep to-night with a whole throat, you will keep your tongue within your teeth. It wouldn’t take much to persuade me to give you a little drum-head law. Do you hear that?’—

‘It is my advice, major,’—whispered Robinson,—‘to ax no questions of these blackguards.’

‘Be it so, sergeant,’—said Butler,—‘I am weary and sick.’

When other cares were disposed of, and the excited passions of the lawless gang had subsided into a better mood, the dragoon took Butler’s cloak from the baggage and spread it upon the ground beneath the shelter of the shrubbery, and the suffering officer was thus furnished a bed that afforded him some small share of comfort, and enabled to take that rest which he so much needed. Robinson seated himself on the ground beside his companion, and in this situation they patiently resigned themselves to whatever fate awaited them.

Soon after this the whole troop were busy in the pre-

parations for refreshment and sleep. The horses were either *hobbled*, by a cord from the fore to the hind foot, and turned loose to seek pasture around the bivouac, or tethered in such parts of the forest as furnished them an opportunity to feed on the shrubbery. The fire was rekindled, and some small remnants of venison roasted before it; and in less than an hour this reckless and ill-governed band were carousing over their cups with all the rude ribaldry that belonged to such savage natures.

'Come, boys,'—said Peppercorn, who seemed to take a delight in urging the band into every kind of excess, and who possessed that sort of sway over the whole crew,—including their leader no less than the privates—which an expert and ready skill in adapting himself to the humour of the company gave him, and which faculty he now appeared to exercise for the increase of his own influence,—'come boys, laugh while you can—that's my motto. This soldiering is a merry life—fighting, drinking and joking. By the God of war! I will enlist the whole of you into the regular service.—Ferguson or Cruger, which you please, boys!—they are both fine fellows and would give purses of gold for such charming, gay, swaggering blades. Fill up your cans and prepare for another bout. I'm not the crusty cur to stint thirsty men.—A toast, my gay fellows!—

'Listen to Peppercorn,'—cried out some three or four voices.—

'Here's to the honour of the brave captain Hugh Habershaw, and his glorious dogs that won the battle of Grindall's ford!'

A broad and coarse laugh burst from the captain at the announcement of this toast.

'By G—d,'—he exclaimed,—'the fight was not a bad fight.'

'Can you find a joint of venison, Gideon?'—said Peppercorn, aside—'If you can,—give it, and a cup of spirits, to the prisoners.—Stop, I'll do it myself—you will have the old bull-dog on your back.'

And saying this the dragoon rose from his seat, and taking a few fragments of the meat which had been stripped almost to the bone, placed them, together with a can-teen, beside Butler.

'Make the best of your time,'—he said,—'you have but short allowance and none of the best.—If I can serve you, I will do it with a good heart—so, call on me.'

Then turning to the sergeant who sat nigh, he whispered in his ear and, with a distinct and somewhat taunting emphasis, inquired

'Friend Horse Shoe, mayhap thou knowest me?'

'That I do, James Curry,'—replied the sergeant,—'and I have a mean opinion of the company you keep. I don't doubt but you are ashamed to say how you come by them.'

'All is fish that comes into the Dutchman's net,'—said Curry.—'To-night I have caught fat game. You are a sturdy fellow, master Blacksmith, and good at a tug—but remember, friend, I owe you a cuff—and if you weren't a prisoner you should have it.'

'Show me fair play, James Curry, and you shall have a chance now,'—said Horse Shoe,—'I'll keep my parole to surrender when it is over.'

'Silence, fool!'—returned Curry, at the same time rudely pinching Robinson's ear.—'You will be a better man than I take you to be, if you ever wrestle with me again.—I have not forgotten you.'

The dragoon now rejoined his comrades.—

'Peppercorn,'—cried Habershaw,—'d—n the prisoners,—let them fast to-night. The lads want a song.—Come, the liquor's getting low,—we want noise—we want uproar, lad! Sing, bully, sing!'

'Any thing to get rid of the night, noble captain.—What shall I give you?'

'The old catch, master Orderly.—The Jolly Bottle, the Jolly Bottle,'—cried Habershaw, pronouncing this word according to ancient usage, with the accent on the last syllable, as if spelt 'bottél,'—'give us the Jolly Bottle—we all know the chorus of that song. And besides it's the best in your pack.'

'Well, listen, my wet fellows!'—said Peppercorn,—'and pipe lustily in the chorus.'

Here the orderly sang, to a familiar, old English tune, the following song, which was perhaps a common camp ditty of the period.

'You may talk as you please of your candle and book,
And prate about virtue, with sanctified look;
Neither priest, book nor candle, can help you so well
To make friends with the world as the Jolly Bottle.—

'Chorus, my lads;—out with it!'—shouted the singer,—
and the whole crew set up a hideous yell as they joined him—

'Sing heave and ho, and trombelow,
The Jolly Bottle is the best I trow.'

'Then take the bottle, it is well stitched of leather,
And better than doublet keeps out wind and weather:—
Let the bottom look up to the broad arch of blue,
And then catch the drippings, as good fellows do.—
With heave and ho, and trombelow,
'Tis sinful to waste good liquor, you know.

'The soldier he carries his knapsack and gun,
And swears at the weight as he tramps through the sun;
But, devil a loon, did I ever hear tell,
Who swore at the weight of the Jolly Bottle.
So heave and ho, and trombelow,
The Jolly Bottle is a feather, I trow.'

Here the song was interrupted by the return of the two files who had been sent to bring in the bodies of the dead. They had found the missing horse, and now led him into the circle laden with the corpses of Bell and Waters. The troopers halted immediately behind the ring of the revellers, and in such a position as to front Peppercorn and the captain who were thus afforded a full view of the bodies by the blaze of the fire.

'Easy,'—almost whispered Habershaw, now half intoxicated, to the two troopers, as he lifted his hands and motioned to them to halt;—'put them down gently on the ground.—Go on, Peppercorn—let the dead help themselves.—finish the song! That chorus again, my boys!'—And here the last chorus was repeated in the highest key of merriment.

Peppercorn cast an eye at the bodies which, during this interval, had been thrown on the earth, and while the men who had just returned were helping themselves to a drink, he proceeded, in an unaltered voice, with the song.—

'When drinkers are dry, and liquor is low,
 A fray that takes off a good fellow or so,
 Why, what does it do—but help us to bear
 The loss of a comrade,—in drinking his share?
 Then heave and ho, and trombelow,
 A fray and a feast are brothers, you know.

'The philosophers say it's a well-settled fact,
 That a vessel will leak whose bottom is cracked;
 And a belly that's drilled with a bullet, I think
 Is a very bad belly to stow away drink,
 So heave and ho, and trombelow,
 The dead will be dry to-night, I trow.'

'There they are, captain,'—said one of the returning troopers, after the song, to which he and his companion had stood listening with delighted countenances, was brought to an end,—'there they are.—We found Dick Waters lying in the road, and when we first came to him he gave a sort of groan, but we didn't lift him until we came back from hunting Roger Bell—by that time the fellow was as dead as a pickled herring. Where do you think we found Clapper Claw?—Why, half a mile, almost, down the stream:—he was washed along and got jammed up betwixt the roots of a sycamore. We had a long wade after him, and trouble enough to get him:—more, I'm thinking, than a dead man is worth. So, give us some more rum;—this is ugly work to be done in the dark.'

'Scratch a hole for them, lads, under the bushes,'—said Habershaw:—'put a sod blanket over them before morning. That's the fortune of war, as Peppercorn calls it. How are the wounded men getting along?'

'Oh bravely, captain,'—replied Shad Green, or, according to his nick name, Red Mug,—this here physic is a main thing for a scratch.'—

'Bravely!'—echoed Screech Owl, or Tom Dubbs, the same who had been reported by the dragoon as 'kicked by the blacksmith,'—'we are plastering up sores here with the jolly bottle.—

Sing heave and ho, and trombelow,
 The Jolly Bottle is a feather, I trow.

'What's a cracked crown, so as it holds a man's brains?'

continued the drunken carouser, whilst a laugh deformed his stupid physiognomy.—

‘How are we off for provisions, quarter-master?’ inquired the captain of one of the gang.—

‘Eaten out of skin—from nose to tail,’—replied Black Jack.

‘Then the squad must forage to-night,’—continued Habershaw.—‘We must take a buck, my sweet ones!—there are plenty along the river. Get your rifles, and prepare lights;—and, to keep out of the way of our horses, don’t stop short of a mile.—Be about it, lads. Black Jack this is your business.’

‘True captain,’ replied the person addressed,—‘I shall have all things ready directly.’—

It was near midnight, when Black Jack having prepared some faggots of pitch pine, and selected three or four of the best marksmen, left the bivouac to look for deer. Habershaw himself, though lazy and inordinately impressed with a sense of his own dignity, and now confused with liquor, could not resist the attraction of this sport. He accordingly, not long after the others had departed, took a rifle and, attended by his bull-dog, whom he never parted from on any occasion, slowly followed in the direction chosen by the hunters.

Those in advance had scarcely walked along the margin of the river a mile before they lighted their faggots, and began to beat the neighbouring thickets; and their search was not protracted many minutes when the light of their torches was thrown full upon the eyes of a buck. A shot from one of the marksmen told with unerring precision in the forehead of the animal.

The report and the light brought the corpulent captain into the neighbourhood. He had almost walked himself out of breath; and as he did not very well preserve his perpendicularity, or a straight line of march, he had several times been tripped up by the roots of trees, or by rocks and briars in his path. Exhausted, at length, and puzzled by the stupefaction of his own brain, as well as by the surrounding darkness, he sat down at the foot of a tree, determined to wait the return of the hunting party. His faithful and congenial ‘Beauty,’ not less palsy and short-

winded than himself, and not more savage or surly in disposition, now couched upon his haunches, immediately between his master's legs—and here this pair of beastly friends remained silent and mutually soothed by their own companionship. During this interval the person who bore the fire, followed by one of the marksmen, crept slowly onward to the vicinity of the spot where the captain had seated himself. The lapse of time had proved too much for Habershaw's vigilance, and he had, at length, with his head resting against the trunk of the tree, fallen into a drunken slumber. The short crack of a rifle at hand, and the yell of his dog awakened him:—he started upon his feet with sudden surprise, and stepping one pace forward, stumbled and fell over the dead body of his favourite Beauty, who lay beneath him weltering in blood. The shot was followed by a rush of the hunter up to the spot: it was Gideon Blake.

'Buck or doe, it is my shot!'—cried Gideon, as he halted immediately beside Habershaw.—

'May all the devils eternally blast you, Gideon Blake!'—thundered out the incensed captain.—'You have sought my life, you murdering wolf, and your bullet has killed Beauty. Damnable wild cat—this is what you have been scheming after!'—

'I shot at the eyes of what I thought a deer,'—returned Blake.—'You were a fool, Hugh Habershaw, to bring a dog into such a place.'—

'My poor dog, my brave dog! Beauty was worth ten thousand such bastard villains as you!—And to have him killed!—May the devil feast upon your soul this night, Gideon Blake!—go, and account for your wickedness!—Take that,—snake,—tiger,—black-hearted whig and rebel,—and be thankful that you didn't come to your end by the help of hemp!'—And in this gust of passion he struck his knife into the bosom of the trooper, who groaned, staggered and fell.

At this moment the person bearing the fire, hearing the groan of his comrade, rushed up to the spot and seized Habershaw's arm, just as the monster was raising it over the fallen man to repeat the blow.

'Damn him—see what he has done!'—exclaimed the

captain, as he lifted up the dead body of the dog, so as to show in the light the wound inflicted by the ball between the eyes,—‘this poor, faithful, dumb beast was worth a hundred such hell-hounds as he.’

‘I am murdered,’—said the wounded man,—‘I am murdered in cold blood.’

The noise at this place brought together the rest of the hunters, who were now returning with the buck thrown across a horse that had been led by one of the party. Blake’s wound was examined by them, and some linen applied to staunch the blood. The man had fainted, but it was not ascertained whether the stab was mortal. Habershaw stood sullenly looking on during the examination, and finding that life had not instantly fled, he coolly wiped his knife and restored it to his girdle.—

‘The fellow has no idea of dying,’—he said with a visible concern,—‘and has got no more than he deserves. He will live to be hung yet. Take him to quarters.’—

‘Make a hurdle for him,’—said one of the bystanders:—and, accordingly, two men cut a few branches from the neighbouring wood, and twisting them together, soon constructed a litter upon which they were able to bear the body of the wounded hunter to the rendezvous. The others, scarcely uttering a word as they marched along, followed slowly with the buck, and in half an hour the troop was once more assembled under the chestnut.

For a time there was a sullen and discontented silence amongst the whole crew, that was only broken by the groans of the wounded trooper. Occasionally there was a slight outburst of sedition from several of the troop, as a sharper scream, indicating some sudden increase of pain, from Gideon Blake, assailed their ears. Then there were low and muttered curses pronounced by Habershaw, in a tone that showed his apprehension of some vengeance against himself;—and these imprecations were mingled with hints of the disloyalty of the trooper, and charges of a pretended purpose to betray his fellow soldiers, evidently insinuated by the captain to excuse his act of violence. Then he approached the sick man, and felt his pulse, and examined his wound, and pronounced the hurt to be trifling. ‘It will do him good,’—

he said with affected unconcern,—‘and teach him to be more true to his comrades hereafter.’—But still the fate of the man was manifestly doubtful, and the rising exasperation of the troop became every instant more open. Alarmed and faint-hearted at these symptoms of discontent, Habershaw, at last, called the men into a circle, and made them a speech, in which he expressed his sorrow for the act he had committed, endeavoured to excuse himself by the plea of passion at the loss of his dog,—upon whose merits he dwelt with a real feeling,—and finally, perceiving that these excuses did not satisfy his hearers, acknowledged his drunken condition and his unconsciousness of the deed he had done until the horrible consequences of it were before his eyes.—Here Peppercorn interposed in his favour, alleging that he had examined the wound, and that, in his opinion, the trooper’s life was not in danger.—‘And as the captain is sorry for it, lads,’—he concluded,—‘why what is to be done but let the thing drop?—So, if there’s another canteen in the squad, we will wet our whistles, boys, and go to sleep.’

This appeal was effectual, and was followed by a hearty cheer. So, draining the dregs of the last flask, the thoughtless and debauched company retired to rest—Habershaw sneaking away from them with a heart loaded with malice and revenge.

A few men were employed, for a short time, in burying the bodies of the troopers who were killed in the fray; and excepting the guard—who busied themselves in skinning the buck and broiling some choice slices before the fire, and in watching the prisoners, or attending upon their sick comrade—all were sunk into silence, if not repose.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE TROOPERS MOVE WITH THEIR PRISONERS.

'Oft he that doth abide,
Is cause of his own paine,
But he that flieth in good tide,
Perhaps may fight again.'—*Old Proverb.*

It was with the most earnest solicitude that Butler and his companion watched the course of events, and became acquainted with the character of the ruffians into whose hands they had fallen. The presence of James Curry in this gang excited a painful consciousness in the mind of the soldier, that he had powerful and secret enemies at work against him; but who they were, was an impenetrable mystery. Then, the lawless habits of the people who had possession of him, gave rise to the most anxious distrust as to his future fate:—he might be murdered in a fit of passion, or tortured with harsh treatment to gratify some concealed malice. His position in the army was, it seemed, known too; and, for aught that he could tell, his mission might be no secret to his captors. Robinson's sagacity entered fully into these misgivings. He had narrowly observed the conduct of the party who had made them prisoners, and with that acute insight which was concealed under a rude and uneducated exterior, but which was strongly marked in his actions, he had already determined upon the course which the safety of Butler required him to pursue. According to his view of their present difficulties it was absolutely necessary that he should effect his escape, at whatever personal hazard. Butler, he rightly conjectured, was the principal object of the late ambushade; that, for some unknown purpose, the possession of this officer became important to those who had procured the attack upon him, and that James Curry had merely hired this gang of desperadoes to secure the prize. Under these circumstances, he concluded that the major would be so strictly guarded as to forbid all hope of escape, and that any attempt by him to effect it, would only be punished by certain death. But, in regard to himself, his calculation was different.—'First,'—said he,—

'I can master any three of this beggarly crew, in an open field and fair fight,—and secondly, when it comes to the chances of a pell-mell, they will not think me of so much account as to risk their necks by a long chace:—their whole eyes would undoubtedly be directed to the major.' The sergeant, therefore, determined to make the attempt,—and, in the event of his success to repair to Sumpter, who he knew frequented some of the fastnesses in this region; or, in the alternative, to rally such friends from the neighbouring country, as were not yet overawed by the Tory dominion, and bring them speedily to the rescue of Butler. Full of these thoughts, he took occasion during the night, whilst the guard were busy in cooking their venison, and whilst they thought him and his comrade wrapt in sleep, to whisper to Butler the resolution he had adopted.

'I will take the first chance to-morrow to make a dash upon these ragamuffins,'—he said,—'and I shall count it hard if I don't get out of their claws. Then rely upon me—I shall keep near you in spite of these devils. So, be prepared, if I once get away, to see me like a witch that travels on a broomstick or creeps through a key-hole.—But whisht!—the drunken vagabonds mustn't hear us talking.'—

Butler, after due consideration of the sergeant's scheme, thought it, however perilous, the only chance they had of extricating themselves from the dangers with which they were beset, and promised the most ready co-operation; determining also, to let no opportunity slip which might be improved to his own deliverance. 'Your good arm and brave heart, Galbraith, never stood you in more urgent stead than they may do to-morrow,'—was his concluding remark.

When morning broke, the light of day fell upon a strange and disordered scene. The drunken and coarse wretches of the night before, now lessened in number and strength by common broil and private quarrel, lay stretched on their beds of leaves. Their motley and ill-assorted weapons lay around in disarray; drinking cups and empty flasks were scattered over the trodden grass: the skin and horns of the buck, and disjointed fragments

of raw flesh were seen confusedly cast about beneath the tree; and a conspicuous object in the scene were the clots of blood and gore, both of man and beast, that disfigured the soil. Two new made graves, or rather mounds hastily scratched together and imperfectly concealing the limbs of the dead, prominently placed but a few feet from the ring of last night's revelry, told of the disasters of the fight at the ford. The brushwood fire had burnt down into a heap of smouldering ashes, and the pale and sickly features of the wounded trooper were to be discerned upon a pallet of leaves, hard by the heap of embers, surrounded by the remnants of bones and roasted meat that had been flung carelessly aside. In a spot of more apparent comfort, sheltered by an overhanging canopy of vines and alder, lay Butler stretched upon his cloak, and, close beside him, the stout frame of Horse Shoe Robinson. In the midst of all these marks of recent riot and carousal, sat two swarthy figures, haggard and wan from night-watching, armed at every point and keeping strict guard over the prisoners.

The occasional snort and pawing of horses, in the neighbouring wood, showed that these animals were alert at the earliest dawn; whilst, amongst the first who seemed aware of the approach of day, was seen rising from the earth, where it had been flung in stupid torpor for some hours, the bloated and unsightly person of Hugh Habershaw, now much the worse for the fatigue and revelry of the preceding night. A savage and surly expression was seated on his brow, and his voice broke forth more than ordinarily harsh and dissonant, as he ordered the troop to rouse and prepare for their march.

The summons was tardily obeyed; and while the yawning members of the squad were lazily moving to their several duties, and shaking off the fumes of their late debauch, the captain was observed bending over the prostrate form of Gideon Blake, and directing a few anxious inquiries into his condition. The wounded man was free from pain; but his limbs were stiff, and the region of the stab sore and sensitive to the least touch. The indications, however, were such as to show that his wound was not likely to prove mortal. By the order of

Habershaw, a better litter was constructed and the troopers were directed to bear him, by turns, as far as Christie's, where he was to be left to the nursing of the family. It was a full hour before the horses were saddled, the scattered furniture collected, and the preparations for the march completed. When these were accomplished the prisoners were provided with the two sorriest horses of the troop; and they now set forward at a slow pace, under the escort of four men commanded by James Curry. The two troopers who bore the sick man followed on foot; Habershaw with the remainder, one of whom had appropriated Captain Peter whilst he led the horses of the dismounted men, brought up the rear.

On the journey there was but little spoken by any member of the party; the boisterous and rude nature of the men who composed the troop seemed to have been subdued by sleep into a temper of churlish indifference or stolid apathy. Peppercorn or James Curry, as the reader now recognizes him, strictly preserved his guard over the prisoners, manifesting a severity of manner altogether different from the tone of careless revelry which characterized his demeanour on the preceding night. It never relaxed from an official and sullen reserve. A moody frown sat upon his brow, and his communication with the prisoners was confined to short and peremptory commands; whilst, at the same time, he forbade the slightest intercourse with them on the part of any of the guard. During the short progress to Christie's he frequently rode apart with Habershaw; and the conversation which then occupied these two was maintained in a low tone, and with a serious air that denoted some grave matter of deliberation.

It was more than an hour after sunrise when the cavalcade reached the point of their present destination. There were signs of an anxious purpose in the silence of the journey, broken as it was only by low mutterings amongst the men, above which sometimes arose an expression of impatience and discontent, as the subject of their whispered discussions appeared to excite some angry objection from several of the party; and this mystery was not

less conspicuous in the formal order of the halt and in the pause that followed, upon their arrival at the habitation.

The house, in front of which they were drawn up, was, according to the prevailing fashion of the time, a one-storied dwelling covering an ample space of ground, built partly of boards and partly of logs, with a long piazza before it terminating in small rooms, made by enclosing the sides for a few feet at either extremity. Being situated some twenty paces aside from the road, the intervening area was bounded by a fence through which a gate afforded admission. A horse rack with a few feeding troughs was erected near this gate; and a draw-well, in the same vicinity furnished a ready supply of water. With the exception of a cleared field around the dwelling, the landscape was shaded by the natural forest.

A consultation, of some minute's duration, was held between Habershaw and Curry, when the order to dismount was given, accompanied with an intimation of a design to tarry at this place for an hour or two,—but the men, at the same time, were directed to leave the saddles upon their horses. One or two were detailed to look after the refreshment of the cattle, whilst the remainder took possession of the principal room. The first demands of the troop were for drink, and this being indulged, that brute feeling of conviviality which in gross natures depends altogether upon sensual excitement, began once more to break down the barriers of discipline, and to mount into clamour.

The scenes of the morning had made a disagreeable impression upon the feelings of Butler and his comrade. The changed tone and the ruffian manners of the band, the pause, and the doubts which seemed to agitate them, boded mischief. The two prisoners, however, almost instinctively adopted the course of conduct which their circumstances required. They concealed all apprehension of harm, and patiently awaited the end. Horse Shoe even took advantage of the rising mirth of the company when drink began to exhilarate them, and affected an easy tone of companionship which was calculated to throw them off their guard. He circulated freely amongst the men, and by private conference with some of the indivi-

duals around him, who, attracted by his air of confiding gaiety, seemed inclined to favour his approaches of familiarity, he soon discovered that the gang were divided in sentiment in regard to some important question touching the proposed treatment of himself and his friend. A party, at least, he was thus made aware, were disposed to take his side in the secret disputes which had been in agitation. He was determined to profit by this dissension, and accordingly applied himself still more assiduously to cultivate the favourable sentiment he found in existence.

Whilst breakfast was in preparation, and Habershaw and Curry were occupied with the wounded man in an adjoining apartment, the sergeant, playing the part of a boon companion, laughed with the rioters and, uninvited, made himself free of their cups.

'I should like to know,'—he said to one of the troopers,—'why you are giving yourselves all this trouble about a couple of simple travellers that happened to be jogging along the road? If you wanted to make a pitched battle you ought to have sent us word—but if it was only upon a drinking bout you had set your hearts—there was no occasion to be breaking heads for the honour of getting a good fellow in your company, when he would have come of his own accord at the first axing. There was no use in making such a mighty secret about it—for as we were travelling the same road with you,—you had only to show a man the civility of saying you wanted our escort, and you should have had it at a word.—Here's to our better acquaintance, friend!'

'You mightn't be so jolly, Horse Shoe Robinson,'—said Shad Green, or, according to his nickname, Red Mug, in a whisper,—'if some of them that took the trouble to find you, should have their own way.—It's a d—d tight pull whether you are to be kept as a prisoner of war, or shoved under ground this morning without tuck of drum.—That for your private ear.'

'I was born in old Carolina myself,'—replied Horse Shoe, aside to the speaker,—'and I don't believe there is many men to be found in it who would stand by and see the rules and regulations of honourable war blackened and trod down into the dust by any cowardly trick of war.'

er.—If it comes to that—many as there are against two, our lives will not go at a cheap price.’—

‘Whisht!’—returned the other,—‘with my allowance, or one, it shan’t be. A prisoner’s a prisoner, I say—and damnation to the man that would make him out worse.’

‘They say you are a merry devil, old Horse Shoe,’—exclaimed he who was called Bow Legs, who now stepped up and slapped the sergeant on the back.—‘So take a wig, man—fair play is a jewel!—that’s my doctrine. Fight when you fight, and drink when you drink—and hat’s the sign to know a man by.’—

‘There is some things,’—said the sergeant,—‘in this word that’s good—and some—that’s bad. But I have always found that good and bad is so mixed up and jumbled together, that you don’t often get much of one without a little of the other. A sodger’s a sodger—no matter what side he is on;—and they are the naturalist people in the world for fellow-feeling. One day a man is up, and then the laugh’s on his side—next day he is down, and then the laugh’s against him.—So as a sodger has more of these ups and downs than other folks, there’s the reason his heart is tenderer towards a comrade than other people’s.—Here’s your health, sir.—This is a wicked world, and twisted, in a measure, upside down,—and it is well known that evil communications corrupts good manners—but sodgers were made to set the world right again, on its legs, and to preserve good breeding and christian charity.—So there’s a sarmon for you, you tinkers!’—

‘Well done, mister preacher!’—vociferated a prominent reveller.—‘If you will desert and enlist with us you shall be the chaplain of the troop.—We want a good swearing, drinking and tearing blade who can hold a discourse over his liquor, and fence with the devil at long words.—You’re the very man for it!—Huzza for the blacksmith!’

‘Huzza for the blacksmith!’—shouted several others in the apartment.

Butler, during this scene, had stretched himself out at full length upon a bench, to gain some rest in his present exhausted and uncomfortable condition, and was now partaking of the refreshment of a bowl of milk and some coarse bread, which one of the troopers had brought him.

‘What’s all this laughing and uproar about?’—said Habershaw entering the room with Curry, just at the moment of the acclamation in favour of the sergeant.—‘Is this a time for your cursed wide throats to be braying like asses!—We have business to do.—And you, sir,’—said he turning to Butler—‘you must be taking up the room of a half dozen men on a bench with your lazy carcass! Up, sir,—I allow no lolling and lying about to rascally whigs and rebels. You have cost me the death of a dog that is worth all your filthy whig kindred—and you have made way with two of the best men that ever stepped in shoe leather.—Sit up, sir, and thank your luck that you haven’t your arms pinioned behind you, like a horse thief.’

‘Insolent coward,’—said Butler, springing upon his feet,—‘hired ruffian! you shall in due time be made to pay for the outrage you have inflicted upon me.’—

‘Tie him up,’—cried Habershaw,—‘tie him up! And now I call you all to bear witness that he has brought the sentence upon himself—it shall be done without waiting another moment.—Harry Gage—I give the matter over to you. Draw out four men—take them into the yard and despatch the prisoners off-hand!—shoot the traitors!—On the spot—before we eat our breakfasts!—I was a fool that I didn’t settle this at day-light this morning:—the rascally filth of the earth! Have no heart about it, man!—but make sure work by a short distance. This is no time for whining.—When have the whigs shown mercy to us!’—

‘It shall be four against four then!’—cried out Shadrach Green, seconded by Andrew Clopper,—‘and the first shot that is fired shall be into the bowels of Hugh Habershaw—stand by me, boys!’—

In a moment the parties were divided and had snatched up their weapons, and then stood looking angrily at each other as if daring each to commence the threatened affray.—

‘Why how now—devil’s imps!’—shouted Habershaw.—‘Have you come to a mutiny?—Have you joined the rebels?—James Curry—look at this!’—By the bloody laws of war, I will report every rascal who dares to lift his hand against me!’

'The thing is past talking about,'—said the first speaker, coolly,—'Hugh Habershaw, neither you nor James Curry shall command the peace if you dare to offer harm to the prisoners.—Now, bully,—report that as my saying. They are men fairly taken in war, and shall suffer no evil past what the law justifies. Give them up to the officer of the nearest post—that's what we ask—carry them to Innis's camp if you choose—but whilst they are in our keeping there shall be no blood split—without mixing some of your own with it, Hugh Habershaw.'—

'Arrest the mutineers,'—cried Habershaw, trembling with rage.—'Who are my friends in this room?—Let hem stand by me, and then—blast me, if I don't force obedience to my orders.'

'You got off by the skin of your teeth last night,'—aid Green,—'when you tried to take the life of Gideon Blake:—for that you deserved a bullet through your skull. Take care that you don't get your reckoning this morning—captain and all as you are.'—

'What in the devil would you have?'—inquired Habershaw, stricken into a more cautious tone of speech by the decided bearing of the man opposed to him.

'The safety of the prisoners until they are delivered to the commander of a regular post—we have resolved upon that,'—was the reply.

'Curry!'—said Habershaw, turning in some perplexity to the dragoon as if for advice.

'Softly, captain,—we had better have a parley here,'—aid Curry—who then added in a whisper.—'There's been some damned bubbery kicked up here by the blacksmith.—This comes of giving that fellow the privilege of talking.'—

'A word, men,'—interposed Horse Shoe, who during this interval had planted himself near Butler, and with him stood ready to act as the emergency might require.—'Let me say a word. This James Curry is my man:—give me a broad sword and a pair of pistols, and I will pledge the hand and word of a sodger,—upon condition that I am allowed five minutes parole to have a pass, here in the yard, with him—it shall be in sight of the whole squad,—I pledge the word of a sodger to

deliver myself back again to the guard, dead or alive, without offering to take any chance to make off in the mean time. Come, James Curry your word to the back of that;—and then buckle on your sword, man. I heard your whisper.’—

‘Soldiers,’—said Curry, stepping into the circle which the party had now formed round the room.—‘Let me put in a word as a peace-maker.—Captain Habershaw wont be unreasonable. I will vouch for him that he will fulfil your wish regarding the conveying of the prisoners to a regular post:—come, come, let us have no brawling! For shame!—put down your guns. There may be reason in what you ask—although it isn’t so much against the fashion of the times, to shoot a whig either. But any thing for the sake of quiet amongst good fellows. Be considerate, noble captain—and do as the babies wish. As for Horse Shoe’s brag—he is an old soldier—and so am I—that’s enough.—We are not so green as to put a broad sword and a brace of pistols, into the hands of a bullying prisoner. No, no, Horse Shoe!—try another trick, old boy! Ha, ha, lads! you are a set of fine dashing chaps, and this is only one of your madcap bits of spunk that boils up with your liquor.—Take another cup on it, my merry fellows, and all will be as pleasant as the music of a fife.—Come, valiant captain of the Tiger, join us. And as for the prisoners—why let them come in for snacks with us. So there’s an end of the business.—All is as mild as new milk again.’

‘Well, well,—get your breakfasts,’—said Habershaw gruffly.—‘Blast you—I have spoiled you, by good treatment—you ungrateful, carnivorous dogs!—But, as Peppercorn says, there’s an end of it!—So, go to your feeding, and when that’s done we will push for Blackstocks.’—

The morning meal was soon despatched, and the party reassembled in the room where the late disturbance had taken place. The good nature of Robinson continued to gain upon those who had first taken up his cause, and even brought him into a more lenient consideration with the others. Amongst the former I have already noted Andrew Clopper, a rough and insubordinate member of the gang, who, vexed by some old grudge against the

captain, had efficiently sustained Green in the late act of mutiny, and who now, struck with Horse Shoe's bold demeanour towards Curry, began to evince manifest signs of a growing regard for the worthy sergeant. With this man Horse Shoe contrived to hold a short and secret interview, that resulted in the quiet transfer of a piece of gold into the freebooter's hand,—which was received with a significant nod of assent to whatever proposition accompanied it. When the order of 'boot and saddle' was given by Habershaw, the several members of the troop repaired to their horses, where a short time was spent in making ready for the march; after which the whole squad returned to the porch and occupied the few moments of delay in that loud and boisterous carousal, which is apt to mark the conduct of such an ill-organized body in the interval immediately preceding the commencement of a day's ride. This was a moment of intense interest to the sergeant, who kept his eyes steadily fixed upon the movements of Clopper, as that individual lingered behind his comrades in the equipment of his horse. This solicitude did, however, not arrest his seeming mirth, as he joined in the rude jests of the crowd, and added some sallies of his own.

'Give me that cup,'—he said at length, to one of the men, as he pointed to a gourd on a table,—'before we start I have a notion to try the strength of a little cold water, just by way of physic, after all the liquor we have been drinking;'—and having got the implement in his hand, he walked deliberately to the draw-well where he dipped up a draught from the bucket that stood on its brink. As he put the water to his lips and turned his back upon the company, he was enabled to take a survey of the horses that were attached to the rack near him,—then suddenly throwing the gourd from him, he sprang towards his own trusty steed, leaped into his saddle at one bound, and sped, like an arrow from a bow, upon the highway. This exploit was so promptly achieved, that no one was aware of the sergeant's purpose until he was some twenty paces upon his journey. As soon as the alarm of his flight was spread, some three or four rifles were fired after him in rapid succession, during which he was seen ducking his

head and moving it from side to side with a view to baffle the aim of the marksmen. The confusion of the moment in which the volley was given rendered it ineffectual, and the sergeant was already past the first danger of his escape.

‘To horse and follow!’—resounded from all sides.

‘Look to the other prisoner,’—roared out Habershaw—‘if he raises his head, blow out his brains! Follow, boys, follow!’—

‘Two or three of you come with me,’—cried Curry,—and a couple of files hastened with the dragoon to their horses. Upon arriving at the rack it was discovered that the bridles of the greater part of the troop were tied in hard knots in such a manner as to connect each two or three horses together.

A short delay took place whilst the horsemen were disentangling their reins, and Curry, being the first to extricate his steed, mounted and set off in rapid pursuit. He was immediately followed by two others.

At the end of half an hour the two privates returned, and reported that they had been unable to obtain a view of the sergeant or even of Curry. Shortly afterwards the dragoon himself was descried retracing his steps at a moderate trot towards the house. His plight told a tale upon him of discomfiture: one side of his face was bleeding with a recent bruise, his dress disarranged and his back covered with dust. The side of his horse also bore the same taint of the soil.

He rode up to Habershaw,—who was already upon the road at the head of the remaining members of the squad, having Butler in charge,—and informed him that he had pursued the sergeant at full speed until he came in sight of him, when the fugitive had slackened his gait as if on purpose to allow himself to be overtaken.—‘But the devil grip the fellow!’—he added—‘he has a broad-side like a man-of-war. In my hurry I left my sword behind me,—and when I came up with him, I laid my hand upon his bridle,—but by some sudden sleight which he has taught his horse, he contrived, somehow or other, to upset me—horse and all—down a bank on the road side. And when I lay on the ground sprawling—do you think the jolly

runagate didn't rein up and give me a broad laugh—and ask me if he could be of any *sarvice* to me?—He then bade me good bye, saying he had an engagement that prevented him from favouring me any longer with his company. Gad! it was so civilly done that all I could say was, luck go with you Mr. Horse Shoe—and since we are to part company so soon, may the devil pad your saddle for you!—I'll do him the justice to say that he's a better horseman than I took him for.—I can hardly begrudge a man his liberty who can win it as cleverly as he has done.'

Well, there's no more to be said about it,'—remarked Habershaw.—'He is only game for another day. He is like a bear's cub,—which is as much as to signify that he has a hard time before him. He would have only given us trouble—so let him go! Now, boys, away for Blackstock's—I will engage I keep the fox that's left safely enough.'

With these words the troop proceeded upon their march.

CHAPTER XIX.

HORSE SHOE's successful escape from the hands of the Tories, it will be conjectured, had been aided by Clopper. The sergeant had sufficiently assured himself of the present safety of Butler, from the spirit with which a strong party of Habershaw's followers had resisted the bloody purpose of their leader before breakfast; and he had also, by the timely reward secretly conveyed to Clopper, received a pledge from that individual that the same protection should still be accorded to the major, in the event of his own extrication from the gang by the perilous exploit which he then meditated. It is no doubt apparent to the reader, that the favour which saved the lives of the prisoners was won from the captors by the address of Robinson, and that whatever good will was kindled up amongst them, was appropriated principally to the ser-

geant—Butler having elicited but little consideration from the band, beyond that interest which the roughest men are apt to take in the fortunes of a young and enterprising soldier. Neither the major's manners nor temper were adapted to conciliate any special regard from such natures.

The escape of the sergeant, therefore, although it added nothing to the perils of Butler's situation, still operated in some degree to his present inconvenience. It caused him to be more rigorously guarded than before, and consequently to be more restricted in his personal comfort. He was hurried forward at a rough and uneasy pace, and both from Habershaw and Curry, and those more immediately of their party, he experienced a surly indifference to the pain that this occasioned him. They seemed to have no regard either to his wants or feelings, and in the passing remarks that fell from them he could gather harsh surmises as to the manner in which he was now likely to be disposed of.

'It is their own fault,'—said one of them to his companion, as Butler overheard the conversation,—'if every prisoner is strung up and shot that is caught now-a-days. Look what Sumpter has been about—just under the nose of the posts:—he makes no more of hanging our people than so many wolves;—and there was captain Huck—will any man say that Sumpter hadn't him murdered in cold blood?'

'Yes,'—added the other,—'let a Tory be caught over yonder amongst the Iredell whigs, on t'other side of the line—or in Tryon—or down here at the Waxhaws—why, a gray fox in a barn yard with forty dogs would have as good a chance for his life.—So, for my share, I am glad to see our folks break up that blasted breed—root and branch.'—

'Innis has got as keen a nose for a whig, as a blood hound,'—said the first speaker,—'and won't stop long to consider what's right to be done, if he gets this chap in his clutches—so it is of no great account that we didn't make short work of it this morning.'

Such remarks, made in secret conference, produced a gloomy effect upon Butler's mind. He had witnessed

enough, in the scenes of the morning, to convince him that Habershaw had been employed to waylay him and take his life, and that the latter purpose had only failed by the lucky conjuncture of circumstances, which led to the mutiny. He was aware, too, that Curry was the prime conductor of the scheme, and drove matters, by a secret influence, as far as he could towards its accomplishment, whilst with a professional hardihood and most hypocritical bearing he affected to be indifferent to the issue. This fellow's malice was the more venomous from his address, and the gay, swaggering, relentless levity with which he could mask the most atrocious designs: nothing could baffle his equanimity; and he seemed to be provided, at all times, with a present expedient to meet the emergency of his condition. He could laugh when detected in the act of doing a murder—and, with equal unconcern, join in a mutiny, or shoot down the contriver of it. The most perplexing feature in this man's present position was his recent connexion with Tyrrel,—a fact that recurred to Butler with many alarming doubts. All the other circumstances accompanying Butler's condition, at this moment, were subjects of distressful uncertainty. Ignorant of the place to which he was to be taken,—into whose hands he was to be delivered—how he was to be disposed of, he could only anticipate the worst. It was obvious that his journey was an expected one, and that the gang who held him were employed by persons in authority—set on, no doubt, by the agency of Tyrrel:—but where was he,—and who was he?—and what influence could he bring to bear against his, Butler's life, now that he had failed in his bloody purpose of lying in wait,—and that it was resolved by these ruffians, who had in part only obeyed his behests, to deliver their prisoner up to the regular authorities of the British army? The mention of the name of Innis by one of the troopers was not calculated to allay his inquietude. This person he knew to have been an active confederate and eager adviser of the new court, lately established at Charleston, to promote the confiscation of the estates of the inhabitants of Carolina disaffected to the royal cause. He was, besides, a

zealous Tory partizan, and, having lately joined the army, was now in command of a detachment of loyalists on the Ennoree.

Then again there was abundant cause of anxiety to the unfortunate officer in the question whether Robinson could be kept acquainted with his condition, or even of the place to which he might be removed—and if acquainted with these particulars, whether, in the disturbed state of the country, he could render any service. These thoughts all contributed to sink his spirits.

Notwithstanding the usual assumed levity of Curry, he had now become resentful towards Butler, and did not give himself the trouble to conceal it. His manner was quick and unaccommodating, showing his vexation at his own want of sagacity inferred by the successful flight of Robinson. Expressions occasionally escaped him that indicated a self-reproof on this subject, though they were partially disguised by an affected undervaluing of the importance of having such a prisoner, so long as he retained the custody of the principal object of the enterprise. But the consciousness of being again baffled by a man, who had once before obtained the mastery over him, roused his pride into the exhibition of a peevish and vindictive demeanour. In this temper he seconded the brutal disposition of Habershaw, and abandoned the captive officer to the coarse insults of those who exercised control over him. There was some mitigation to this annoyance, in the reserved and partial spirit in which the insurgent party of the squad manifested some slight signs of good will towards him. An instance of this spirit was afforded in a passing hint conveyed by Clopper, on one occasion when the troop had halted to water their horses. 'Whatever is to come of it, after we give you up to other hands,'—he said, apart to Butler,—'we will stick to the ground we have taken, that no harm shall be done to you in our keeping.'

The day was intensely hot, and the road, over which the party travelled, rugged and fatiguing; it was, therefore, near one o'clock when they came in sight of the Tiger, a rough, bold, impetuous stream that rushed over a

difficult and almost impassable bed of rocks. On the opposite bank was Blackstocks, a rude hamlet, of some two or three houses, scattered over a rugged hill-side—a place subsequently rendered famous by the gallant repulse of Tarleton by Sumpter. The troop struck into a narrow ford, and, with some scrambling amongst the rocks, succeeded in crossing the stream;—they then galloped rapidly up the hill, towards a farm house which seemed to be the principal place of resort for the people of the neighbourhood. The approach of the party of cavalry drew to the door a bevy of women, children and negroes, who stood idly gaping at the spectacle; and, in addition to these, a detachment of militia, consisting of between twenty and thirty men, were seen to turn out and form a line in front of the house. Habershaw, with an air of magnified importance, halted opposite this detachment, gave a few prompt orders to Curry, in regard to the disposition of the troop, and in an authoritative tone of command, ordered the officer of the militia to detail a guard for the safe keeping of a prisoner of state. The personage addressed,—a tall, ungainly and awkward subaltern,—signified his acquiescence with a bow, and immediately took possession of Butler by seizing the rein of his horse and leading him to one side, when two men, armed with rifles, placed themselves at either stirrup. Habershaw now directed his men to alight, accompanying the order with a caution that the prisoner was not to be allowed to enter the house.—‘The d—d rascal,’—he added,—‘shall not play me the trick of his rebel associate:—no more privilege of going into bar-rooms, and lounging about doors!—See the man stowed away in the barn:—and tell the sentinels never to take their eyes off of him:—do you hear, lieutenant?’

‘You may depend upon my look-out,’—replied the lieutenant, with a flourish of a hacked and rusty sword.—‘Men, march your prisoner straight to the barn;—have a relief, corporal, every two hours, and, towards night, set four on the watch at a time!’

‘Look to it lieutenant!’—shouted Habershaw.—‘No words, sir,—do your duty!’—

And having thus given vent to his own high opinion of himself the bulky captain withdrew into the house.

Butler was now marched into a large log barn, in one corner of which an armful of fodder or dried blades of Indian corn, were shaken out for his bed; and this, he was told, was to be his prison until other orders awaited him. The guard, consisting of two sentinels, were stationed on the inner side of the door, having the prisoner immediately under their eye; and, this disposition being completed, the officer commanding the detachment retired to mingle with the troopers in the farm house.

A half an hour scarcely elapsed, after the arrival of the troopers at Blackstocks, before James Curry had refreshed himself with a hasty meal, and had his horse brought to the door. He seemed bound upon some urgent mission:—

‘Captain St. Jermyn, you say, left this, at sun-rise, this morning,’—said the dragoon, addressing the lieutenant of the militia.

‘He did.—He was here all day yesterday, and thought he should hear from you, last night.’—

‘What route did he take?’

‘To Turnbull, at the post at Ninety-Six.’

‘Is Turnbull there now, think you?’

‘He is,’—replied the lieutenant.—‘They say orders have gone up from Cornwallis to the post, for four light companies, and it is expected that captain Campbell is now on his way with them towards Camden—neither Turnbull nor Cruger would leave the post.’

‘I have heard that this corps was marching to head quarters.—Are you sure St. Jermyn is not with Campbell?’—

‘He said nothing about it yesterday, but I think he wishes to join colonel Innis with the loyalist cavalry.’

‘Where is Innis?’—inquired Curry.

‘Over on Ennoree, about two miles from Musgrove’s mill.’

‘Humph!’—said Curry, thoughtfully,—‘I must ride to the garrison at Ninety-Six.—The devil take this cantering about the country!—I have had more than enough of it.’—

And saying this, the dragoon mounted his horse, and clapping spurs to the restive animal, was soon out of sight.

It was late in the day before the wants of Butler were attended to. He had thrown aside his coat, from the oppressive heat of the weather, and, placing it under his head for a pillow, had fallen into a sleep, from which he was awakened by a summons from one of the sentinels to partake of food. There was more kindness apparent in the demeanour of the soldier, than Butler had been accustomed to meet from the persons who held him captive, and this circumstance won upon his heart and induced him to accept with courtesy the proffered attentions.

‘You live in a divided country, and witness much to make a good man wish this unhappy war were at an end,’—said Butler, after he had eaten of the provisions placed before him.—

‘Indeed we do, sir,’—replied the soldier,—‘and it is enough to make a man’s heart bleed to see brothers fighting against each other, and kindred, that ought to hold together, seeking each other’s lives.—Men will have, and ought to have, their opinions, sir,—but it is hardly good reason for treating one another like savage Indians, because all cannot think alike.—’

‘Do you live in this neighbourhood?’—inquired Butler.

‘Not far away,’—answered the man.

‘You are married?’

‘Yes, and have six children.’—

‘They should be young,’—said Butler,—‘judging by your own age.’—

‘Thank God, sir,’—exclaimed the soldier, with fervour,—‘they are young! And I would pray that they may never live to be old, if these wars are to last. No father can count upon his own child’s living in harmony with him.—My boys, if they were grown enough, might be the first I should meet in battle.’

‘Your name, friend?’—said Butler.

‘B. . .’—replied the other.

‘A good and a brave name,—a name once friendly to the liberty of his country.’—

'Stop, sir,'—said the sentinel.—'This is not the place to talk upon questions that might make us angry with each other:—it is a name still friendly to the liberty of his country—that liberty that supports the king and laws—and punishes treason.'

'I cannot debate with you,'—replied Butler,—'I am your prisoner.'

'I am a man,'—said the soldier firmly,—'and would not take advantage of him that cannot take his own part—but these questions, sir, are best dropped,—they have made all the provinces mad. However, I do not blame you, sir,—I will not deny that there are good men on your side.'

'And on yours, doubtless,'—returned Butler.

'We have many bad ones, sir,'—replied the soldier,—'and as you have spoken like a well-tempered gentleman to me, I will give you a friendly hint!—Here the sentinel spoke in a lowered tone.—'Have your eyes about you,—these men are none of the best, and would think but little of taking from you any thing of value.—As you slept, just now, I saw a golden trinket hanging by a ribbon in your bosom.—You are a young man, sir,—and a soldier, I hear:—this may be some present from your lady—as I guess you have one.—If others had seen it, as I saw it, you might have been the loser.—That's all.'

'Thank you, honest friend—from my heart, I thank you,'—replied Butler eagerly.—'Oh, God!—that bauble is a consolation to me, that in this hour I would not part with—no, no.—Thank you, friend, a thousand times!'

'Have done,'—said the soldier,—'and in future be more careful:—the relief is coming this way.'

And the sentinel, taking up his rifle, repaired to his post. In a few moments, the guard was changed, and those lately on duty were marched to the dwelling house.

When night came on, the immediate guard around Butler's person was doubled; some few comforts were added to his forlorn prison by the kindness of the soldier Bruce, and he was left to pass the weary hours of darkness in communion with his own thoughts, or in the enjoyment of such repose as his unhappy state of thralldom allowed.

if the agitation of his spirits had permitted sleep, there were but few moments of the night when it might have been indulged. The outbursts of revelry, the loud and boisterous laugh, and still louder oaths of the party who occupied the dwelling house near at hand, showed that they had plunged into their usual debauch, and now aroused over their frequently filled cups; and the clamour that broke upon the night might have baffled slumbers of a mind less anxious and wakeful than his own.

The party of troopers and militia sat at the door to take advantage of the coolness of the night, and, as they sipped the busy flagon, and, with every draught, grew more noisy, scarce a word fell from their lips that was not distinctly heard by Butler. It was with intense interest, therefore, that he listened to the conversation when it led to a topic that greatly concerned himself: and that he might not alarm the suspicion of the speakers he affected sleep.

'Sumpter has been hovering about Ninety-Six,'—said the lieutenant,—'and, if one could believe all the stories that are told about him, he must be a full cousin, at least, to a certain person that it wouldn't be right to mention in respectable company;—for, by the accounts, he is one day on the Wateree, and the next, whoop and away!—and here he is, almost over at Augusta.—It seems almost past the power of human legs for a mortal man to make such strides as they tell of him.'—

'Who says Sumpter is near Ninety-Six?'—inquired one of the party,—'I can only say if that's true, he is a ghost—that's all. Here's Harry Turner will swear that he saw him, day before yesterday, in North Carolina on his march towards Burk.'

'Indeed did I,'—responded Harry, one of the militia men.—

'There is no mistake about it,'—interposed the lieutenant.—'A vidette of Brown's came scampering through here this morning, who reported the news; and the man had good right to know, for he saw Cruger yesterday who told him all about it, and then sent him off to Wahab's plantation, near the Catawba fords for Hanger's rangers.'

It was on his way back this morning that he stopped five minutes, only to give us warning.'

'This is only some story that your drunken head been dreaming about, Gabriel,'—said Habershaw.—'T' is not a word of truth in it,—the rangers went down Camden, three days ago.—Who saw the vidette bes yourself?'

'The whole detachment,'—replied the lieutenant.—talked to the man and had the story from him—a queer fellow he was—a good stout chap that like have been caught by a pair of reconnoitering whigs few miles back between this and Pacolet—they put him up to the saddle flaps.—But you must have seen yourself, captain Habershaw; for he told us you were the road.'

'From towards Pacolet?'—exclaimed the captain in surprise;—'We saw nobody on that road.—When did man arrive?'

'About an hour before you. He came at full speed with his horse—a great, black, snorting beast, seven hands high, at least—all in a foam. He was first passing by without stopping, but we challenged him brought him short upon his haunches, and then he us he was in a hurry, and mustn't be delayed.'

'What kind of a looking man was he?'—inquired Habershaw.

'A jolly fellow,'—replied the lieutenant,—'almost big as his horse.—A good civil fellow, too, that sat well at a canteen. He made a joke of the matter at your coming up, and called you old Cat-o'-nine tails said that you were the cat, and your nine tag-rags were the tails—ha, ha, ha.'

'Blast the bastard!'—exclaimed Habershaw,—'could he be?'

'Why we asked that, but he roared out with a gaw, haw, haw,—took another drink, and said he was not christened.'

'You should, as a good soldier,'—said Habershaw—'have made him give his name.'

'By the parson's pig! I tried him again, and he would only let us have a nickname,—he told us then that he

called Jack-o'-Lantern, and had a special good stomach—and that if we wanted more of him we must give him a snatch of something to eat. Well, we did so. After that, he said he must have our landlord's sword, for his own had been torn from him by the whig troopers, that pushed him so hard,—and that the bill for it must be sent to Cruger.—So he got the old cheese knife that used to hang over the fire-place and strung it across his shoulder.—He laughed so hard, and seemed so good natured that there was no doing any thing with him. At last he mounted his horse again, just stooped down and whispered in my ear at parting, that he was an old friend of yours—and that you could tell us all the news, and away he went, like a mad bully, clinking it over the hill to the tune of twenty miles an hour.'—

'A black horse did you say?'—inquired Habershaw.—'Had he a white star in the forehead, and the two hind legs white below the knee.'

'Exactly,'—said the lieutenant and several others of the party.

'It was Horse Shoe Robinson,'—exclaimed Habershaw,—'by all the black devils!'—

'Horse Shoe, Horse Shoe, to be sure!'—responded a half dozen voices.

'He was a damned good rider, Horse Shoe, or any body else,'—said the lieutenant.—

'That beats all!'—said one of the troopers,—'the cunning old fox!—He told the truth when he said you would tell the news, captain:—but to think of his lies getting him past the guard, with a sword and a belly full into the bargain!'—

'Why didn't you report instantly upon our arrival?'—asked Habershaw.

'Bless you,'—replied the lieutenant,—'I never suspected him, captain, more than I did you. The fellow laughed so naturally that I would never have thought him a runaway.'

'There it is,'—said Habershaw,—'that's the want of discipline. The service will never thrive till these loggerheads are taught the rules of war.'

Butler had heard enough to satisfy him on one mate-

rial point, namely, that Robinson had secured his escape and was in condition to take whatever advantage of circumstances the times might afford him.—It was a consolation to him also to know that the sergeant had taken this route, as it brought him the nearer to the scene in which the major himself was likely to mingle. With this dawn of comfort brightening up his doubts, he addressed himself more composedly to sleep, and before day light, the sounds of riot having sunk into a lower and more drowsy tone, he succeeded in winning a temporary oblivion from his cares.

CHAPTER XX.

“What ho! What ho!—thy door undo:
Art watching or asleep?”—*Burger's Leonora.*

ON the banks of the Ennoree, in a little nook of meadow, formed by the bend of the stream which, fringed with willows, swept round it almost in a semi-circle, the inland border of the meadow being defined by a gently rising wall of hills covered with wood, was seated, within a few paces of the water, a neat little cottage with a group of out-buildings, presenting all the conveniences of a comfortable farm. The dwelling house itself was shaded by a cluster of trees which had been spared from the native forest, and within view were several fields of cultivated ground neatly enclosed with fences. A little lower down the stream and within a short distance of the house, partially concealed by the bank, stood a small low-browed mill, built of wood. It was near sundown, and the golden light of evening sparkled upon the shower that fell from a leaky race that conducted the water to the head gate, and no less glittered on the spray that was dashed from the large, and slowly revolving wheel. The steady gush of the stream, and the monotonous clack of the machinery, aided by the occasional discordant scream of a flock of geese that frequented the border of the race, and by the gambols of a few children, who played about the confines of the mill, excited plea-

sant thoughts of rural business and domestic content. A rudely constructed wagon, to which were harnessed two lean horses, stood at the door of the mill, and two men, one of them advanced in years, and the other, apparently, just beyond the verge of boyhood, were occupied in heaping upon it a heavy load of bags of meal. The whitened habiliments of these men showed them to be the proper attendants of the place, and now engaged in their vocation. A military guard stood by the wagon, and as soon as it was filled, they were seen to put the horses in motion, and to retire by a road that crossed the stream and take the descending direction of the current close along the opposite bank.

When this party had disappeared, the old man directed the mill to be stopped. The gates were let down, the machinery ungeared and, in a few moments, all was still. The millers now retired to the little habitation hard by.

‘There is so much work lost,’—said the elder to his companion, as they approached the gate that opened into the curtilage of the dwelling.—‘We shall never be paid for that load. Colonel Innis doesn’t care much out of whose pocket he feeds his men,—and as to his orders upon Rawdon’s quarter master, why it is almost the price of blood to venture so far from home to ask for payment;—to say nothing of the risk of finding the army purse as low as a poor miller’s at home.—I begrudge the grain, Christopher, and the work that grinds it—but there is no disputing with these whiskered foot-pads with bayonets in their hands—they must have it and will have it—and there’s an end of it.’

‘Aye,’—replied the man, addressed by the name of Christopher,—‘as you say, they will have it,—and if they are told that a poor man’s sweat has been mixed with their bread, they talk to us about the cause—the cause—the cause. I am tired of this everlasting preaching about king and country.—I don’t know but if I had my own way, I’d take the country against the king any day. What does George the Third care for us, with a great world of water between?’

‘Whisht, Christopher Shaw—whisht boy! We have no opinions of our own—trees and walls have ears at

this time.—It isn't for us to be bringing blood and burning under our roof, by setting up for men who have opinions:—no, no—wait patiently,—and perhaps, Christopher, it will not be long before this gay bird Cornwallis will be plucked of his feathers.—The man is on his way now that, by the help of the Lord, may bring down as proud a hawk as ever flew across the water.—If it should be otherwise, trust to the power above the might of armies, and wiser than the cunning of men, that, by a righteous and peaceful life, we shall make our lot an easier one than it may ever be in mingling in the strife of the evil minded.'

'It is hard, for all that—wise as it is—to be still,'—said Christopher,—'with one's arms dangling by one's side, when one's neighbours and kinsmen are up and girding themselves for battle. It will come to that at last,—fight we must: and, I don't care who knows it, I am for independence, uncle Allen.'

'Your passion, boy, and warmth of temper, I doubt, outruns your discretion,'—said the old man.—'But you speak bravely, and I cannot chide you for it. For the present, at least, be temperate, and, if you can, silent. It is but unprofitable talk for persons in our condition.'

The uncle and nephew now entered the house, and Allen Musgrove,—for this was the person to whom I have introduced my reader,—was soon seated at his family board, invoking a blessing upon his evening meal, and dispensing the cares of a quiet and peaceful household.

'I wonder Mary stays so long with her aunt,'—he said, as the early hour of repose drew nigh.—'It is an ill place for her, wife, and not apt to please the girl, with any thing she may find there. Wat Adair is an irregular man, and savage as the beasts he hunts. His associates are not of the best and but little suited to Mary's quiet temper.'

The wife, a staid, motherly-looking woman, of plain and placid exterior, who was busily engaged amongst a thousand scraps of coarse homespun cloth, which she was fashioning into a garment for some of the younger members of her family, paused from her work, upon this

appeal to her, and directing her glances, above her spectacles, to her husband, replied—

‘Mary has been taught to perform her duties to her kinsfolk, and it isn’t often that she counts whether it is pleasant to her or not. Besides, Watty, rough as he is, loves our girl—and love goes a great way to make us bear and forbear both, husband.—I’ll warrant our daughter comes home when she thinks it right.—But it is a weary way to ride over a wild country, and more so now when Whig and Tory have distracted the land.—I wish Christopher could be spared to go for her.’

‘He shall go to-morrow, wife,’—returned Allen Musgrove.—‘Wat Adair, love her or not, is not the man to go out of his way for a wandering girl, and would think nothing to see the child set out by herself. But come, it is Saturday night, and near bed time.—Put aside your work, wife:—a lesson from the Book of truth, and prayers—and then to rest,’—he said, as he took down a family Bible from a shelf and spread it before him.

The old man put on a pair of glasses which, by a spring, sustained themselves upon his nose, and, with an audible and solemn voice, he read a portion of scripture;—then, placing himself on his knees, whilst the whole family followed his example, he poured forth a fervent and heart-inspired prayer. It was a simple and homely effusion, delivered from the suggestions of the moment, in accordance with a devout habit of thanksgiving and supplication to which he had long been accustomed. He was a presbyterian, and had witnessed, with many a pang, the profligate contempt and even savage persecution with which his sect had been visited by many of the Tory leaders;—especially by the loyalist partisan, captain Huck, who had been recently killed in an incursion of Sumpter’s at Williams’-plantation, not far distant from Musgrove’s present residence. It was this unsparing hostility towards his religion, and impious derision of it, that, more than any other circumstance, had begotten that secret dislike of the Tory cause which, it was known to a few, the miller entertained, although his age, situation, and, perhaps, some ancient prejudice of descent, (for he was the son of an early Scotch emigrant,)

would rather have inclined him to take the royal side—that side which, in common belief and in appearance, he still favoured. ‘Thou hast bent thy bow,’ he said, in the warmest effusion of his prayer, ‘and shot thine arrows, O Lord, amongst this people;—thou hast permitted the ministers of vengeance, and the seekers of blood to ride amongst us,—and thy wrath hath not yet bowed the stubborn spirit of sin—but the hard hearts are given strong arms, and with curses they have smitten the people. Yet even the firebrand that it did please thee not to stay, because of our sins—yea, even the firebrand that did cause conflagration along our border, until, by the light, the erring children of men might read in the dark night, from one end of our boundary even unto the other, the enormity of their own backslidings, and their forgetfulness of thee; that firebrand hath been thrown into the blaze which it had itself kindled, and, like a weapon of war which hath grown dull in the work of destruction, hath been cast into the place of unprofitable lumber, and hath been utterly consumed. The persecutor of the righteous, and the scoffer of the word hath paid the price of blood, and hath fallen into the snares, wherewith he lay in wait to ensnare the feet of the unthinking. But stay now, O Lord of hosts, the hand of the destroyer, and let the angel of peace again spread his wing over our racked and wearied land. Take from the wicked heart his sword and shield, and make the righteous man safe beside his family hearth:—shelter the head of the wanderer, and guide, in safety, the hunted fugitive who flees before the man of wrath; comfort the captive in his captivity, and make all hearts, in this rent and sundered province, to know and bless thy mercies forever more. In especial, we beseech thee to give the victory to him that hath right, and to ‘stablish the foundations of the government in justice and truth, giving liberty of conscience and liberty of law to those who know how to use it.’—At this point the worship of the evening was arrested by a slight knocking at the door.

‘Who goes there?’—exclaimed the old man, starting from his kneeling position.—‘Who raps at my door?’—

'A stranger, good man,'—replied a voice without.—
'A poor fellow that has been hot pressed and hard run.'

'Friend or foe?'—asked Allen Musgrove.

'A very worthless friend to any man at this present speaking,'—replied the person on the outside of the door,—and not fit to be counted a foe until he has had something to eat. If you be Allen Musgrove, open your door.'

'Are you alone, or do you come with followers at your heels?'—my house is small and can give scant comfort to many.'—

'Faith, it is more than I know,'—responded the other,—but if I have followers, it is not with my will that they shall cross your door-sill.—If you be Allen Musgrove, or if you be not—open, friend.—I am as harmless as a barndoor fowl.'

'I do not fear you, sir,'—said Musgrove, opening the door,—you are welcome to all I can give you, whatever colours you serve.'

'Then give us your hand,'—said Horse Shoe Robinson, striding into the apartment.—'You are a stranger to me, but if you are Allen Musgrove, the miller, that I have hearn men speak of, you are not the person to turn your back on a fellow creature in distress.' Your servant, 'mistress,'—he added, bowing to the dame.—'Far riding and fast riding gives a sort of claim these times—so excuse me for sitting down.'

'You are welcome, again;—your name, sir?'—said Musgrove.

'Have I guessed yours?'—inquired Horse Shoe.—

'You have.'—

'Then you must guess mine,—for it isn't convenient to tell it.'

'Some poor Whig soldier,'—said Christopher Shaw privately to Musgrove.—'It isn't right to make him betray himself.—You are hungry, friend,' added Christopher,—and we will first get you something to eat, and then you may talk all the better for it.'

'That's a good word,'—said Horse Shoe,—and a brave word, as things go,—for it isn't every man has the courage to feed an enemy in these days—though I made the

devils do it for me this morning, ha, ha, ha!—Some water, Mr. Musgrove, and it will not come badly to my hand if you can tangle it somewhat.’—

The refreshment asked for was produced by Christopher Shaw; and Horse Shoe, taking the brimming cup in his hand, stood up, and, with a rather awkward courtesy, pledged the draught with—‘Your health, good mistress—and luck to the little ones!—for we grown-up babies are out of the days of luck—except the luck of escaping twisted hemp, or drum-head law, which for to-night, I believe, is mine,’—and he swallowed the mixture at a draught;—then, with a long sigh, placed the cup upon the table and resumed his seat:—‘That there spirit, Mr. Musgrove,’—he added,—‘is a special good friend in need, preach against it who will!’—

‘You say you have ridden far to day,’—remarked the miller,—‘you must be tired.’—

‘I am not apt to get tired,’—replied the sergeant, turning his sword belt over his head, and flinging the weapon upon a bench,—‘but I am often hungry.’—

‘My wife,’—said Musgrove, smiling,—‘has taken that hint before you spoke it—she has already ordered something for you to eat.’

‘That’s an excellent woman!’—exclaimed Horse Shoe.—‘You see, Allen Musgrove, I don’t stand much upon making myself free of your house. I have hearn of you often before I saw you, man,—and I know all about you. You are obliged to keep fair weather with these Tories—who have no consideration for decent, orderly people—but your heart is with the boys that go for liberty.—You see I know you, and am not afeard to trust you.—Perchance, you mought have hearn tell of one Horse Shoe Robinson, who lived over here at the Waxhaws?’—

‘I have heard many stories about that man,’—replied the miller.

‘Well, I won’t tell you that he is in your house to-night, for fear the Tories might take you to account for harbouring such a never-do-well.—But you have got a poor fellow under your roof that has had a hard run to get here.’

‘In my house!’—exclaimed Musgrove,—‘Horse Shoe

Robinson!"—and then after a pause, he continued,—“Well, well,—there is no rule of war that justifies a christian in refusing aid and comfort to a houseless and hunted stranger, who comes with no thought of harm to a peaceful family hearth. I take no part in the war on either side—and,—in your ear, friend Robinson,—I take none *against* you or the brave men that stand by you.’

‘Your hand again,’—said Horse Shoe, reaching his towards the miller.—“Allen, I have come to you under a sore press of heels. An officer of the continental army and me have been travelling through these here parts, and we have been most onaccountably ambushed by a half wild-cat, half bull-dog, known by the name of captain Hugh Habershaw, who cotch us in the night at Grindall’s ford.’

‘Heaven have mercy on the man who has any thing to do with Hugh Habershaw!’—exclaimed the miller’s wife.—

‘Amen, mistress,’—responded the sergeant:—“for a more surlier, misbegotten piece of flesh, there’s not in these wild woods, giving you the choice of bear, panther, catamount, rattlesnake, or what not.—We were sot upon,’—continued the sergeant.—“by this bully and a bevy of his braggadocios, and made prisoners;—but I took a chance to slip the noose this morning, and after riding plump into a hornet’s nest at Blackstock’s, where I put on a new face and tricked the guard out of a dinner and this here old sword, I took a course for this mill, axing people along the road where I should find Allen Musgrove:—and so, after making some roundabouts and dodging into the woods until night came on, to keep clear of the Tories, here I am.’

‘And the officer?’—said Musgrove.

‘He is in the hands of the Philistians yet—most likely now at Blackstocks.’—

‘What might be his name?’—

‘Major Butler—a bold, warm gentleman—that’s been used to tender life and good fortune. He has lands on the sea coast,—unless that new-fangled court at Charles-town, that they call the court of seekerstations, has made them null and void—as they have been making the

estates of better gentleman than they could ever pretend to be:—taking all the best lands, you see, Allen, to themselves,—the cursed iniquiters!

‘Where did you come from with this gentleman?’—

‘A long way off, Mr. Musgrove,—from old Virginny—but lastly from Wat Adair’s.’—

‘Wat’s wife is a relation of my family.’—

‘Then he is a filthy disgrace to all who claim kin with him, Allen Musgrove.—Wat was the man who put us into the wild-cat’s claws—at least, so we had good reason to think.—There was a tidy, spruce and smart little wench there—tut, man!—I am talking of your own kith and kindred, for her name was Mary Musgrove.’—

‘Our girl!’—said the dame with an animated emphasis,—‘our own Mary—what of *her*, Mr. Horse Shoe Robinson?’—

‘That she is as good a child, mistress Musgrove, as any honest parent mought wish for:—she got some sort of inkling of what was contrived,—and so she appeared to major Butler in a dream—or her ghost.’—

‘Mercy on us!—the child has not been hurt?’—cried the mother.—

‘Ondoubtedly not ma’am,’—said Robinson.—‘But it is as true as you are there, she gave us, some how or other, a warning that there was harm in the wind—and we took her advice; but it didn’t do.’—

‘I wish the child were home,’—said Musgrove.—‘Christopher, at day-light, boy—saddle a horse and be off to Adair’s for Mary.’—

The nephew promised to do the errand.—

‘Come, Mr. Robinson, draw near the table and eat something.’—

‘With right good heart,’—replied Horse Shoe;—‘but it’s a kind of camp rule with me, before I taste food,—no matter where—just to look after Captain Peter Clinch;—that’s my horse, friend Musgrove:—so, by your leave, I’ll just go take a peep to see that the Captain is sarved. A good beast is a sort of right arm in scrapish times, and as God ha’n’t given them the gift of speech, we must speak for them.’—

‘Christopher shall save you the trouble,’—replied Musgrove.

‘A good horse never loses any thing by the eye of his master,’—said Horse Shoe.—‘So, Christopher, I’ll go with you.’—

In a short time the sergeant returned into the house, and took his seat at the table, where he fell to, at what was set before him, with a laudable despatch.

‘How far off,’—he inquired,—‘is the nearest Tory post, Mr. Musgrove?’

‘Colonel Innis has some light corps stationed within two miles.— If you had been a little earlier, you would have found some of them at my mill.’—

‘Innis!’—repeated Horse Shoe,—‘I thought Floyd had these parts under command?’—

‘So he has,’—replied the miller,—‘but he has lately joined the garrison at Rocky Mount.’

‘Ha, ha, ha!’—ejaculated Robinson,—‘that’s a pot into which Sumpter will be dipping his ladle before long. All the land between Wateree and Broad belongs to Tom Sumpter,—let mad-cap Tarleton do his best!—We Whigs, Mr. Musgrove, have a little touch of the hobgoblin in us. We travel pretty much where we please. Now, I will tell you, friend, very plainly what I am after. I don’t mean to leave these parts till I see what is to become of major Butler. Innis and Floyd put together sha’n’t hender me from looking after a man that’s under my charge. I’m an old sodger, and they can’t make much out of me if they get me.’

‘The country is swarming with troops of one kind or another,’—said the miller,—‘and a man must have his wits about him who would get through it. You are now, Mr. Robinson, in a very dangerous quarter. The fort at Ninety-Six on one side of you, and Rocky Mount and Hanging Rock on the other:—the road between the three is full of loyalists. Colonel Innis is here to keep the passage open, and, almost hourly, his men are passing. You should be careful in showing yourself in daylight. And as for your poor friend, major Butler, there is not likely to be much good-will shown towards him.—I greatly fear his case is worse than it seems to you.’

'There is somewhere',—said Robinson,—'in that book that lies open on the table—which I take to be the Bible,—the story of the campaigns of king David;—and as I have heard it read by the preacher, it tells how David was pushed on all sides by flying corps of the enemy—and that, seeing he had no sword, he came across a man who gave him victuals and the sword of Goliath—as I got my dinner and a sword this morning from the tavern-keeper at Blackstock's:—and then he set off on his flight to some strange place, where he feigned himself crazy, and scrambled at the gate, and let the spit run down on his beard,—as I have done before now with Tarleton, Mr. Musgrove;—and then king David took into a cave,—which I shouldn't stand much upon doing if there was occasion,—and there the king waited, until he got friends about him and was able to drub the Philistians for robbing the thrashing floors—as I make no doubt these Tories have robbed yours, Allen Musgrove.—But you know all about it—seeing that you are able to read, which I am not. Now, I don't pretend to say that I nor major Butler are as good men as David—not at all:—but the cause of liberty is as good a cause as ever king David fought for, and the Lord, that took his side in the cave, will take the side of the Whigs, sooner or later, and help them to beat these grinding, thieving, burning and throat-cutting Tories;—and, moreover, a brave man ought never to be cast down by such vermin—that's my religion, Mr. Musgrove—though you might hardly expect to find much thought of such things left in a rough fellow like me, that's been hammered in these here wars like an old piece of iron that's been one while a plough coulter, and after that a gun-barrel, and, finally, that's been run up with others into a piece of ordnance—not to say that it mightn't have been a horse shoe in some part of its life—ha, ha, ha!—There's not likely to be much conscience or religion left after all that hammering.'

'He shall keep the simple folk, by their right;—'said Musgrove, quoting a passage from the Psalms,—'defend the children of the poor, and punish the wrong doer.—You have finished your supper, Mr. Robinson,'—he continued,—'and before we retire to rest you will join us

in the conclusion of our family worship, which was interrupted by your coming into the house. We will sing a psalm which has been given to us by that man, whose deliverance has taught you where you are to look for yours.'

'If I cannot help to make music, Allen,'—said Horse Shoe,—'I can listen with good will.'

The miller now produced a little book in black letter, containing a familiar and ancient version of the Psalms; and the following quaint and simple lines were read by him in successive couplets, the whole family singing each distich as soon as it was given out,—not excepting Horse Shoe, who, after the first couplet, having acquired some slight perception of the tune, chimed in with a voice that might have alarmed the sentinels of Innis' camp.

'A king that trusteth in his host
Shall not prevail at length:
The man that of his might doth boast,
Shall fall, for all his strength.

The troops of horsemen eke shall fail
Their sturdy steeds shall starve:
The strength of horse shall not prevail
The rider to preserve.

But so the eyes of God intend
And watch to aid the just:
With such as fear him to offend
And on his goodness trust.

That he of death and great distress
May set their souls from dread:
And if that dearth their land oppress,
In hunger them to feed.

Wherefore our soul doth whole depend
On God, our strength and stay:
He is our shield us to defend
And drive all darts away.'

When this act of devotion was concluded the old man invoked a blessing upon his household, and gave his orders that the family should betake themselves to rest. Horse Shoe had already taken up his sword and was about

retiring to a chamber, under the guidance of Christopher Shaw, when the door was suddenly thrown wide and in rushed Mary Musgrove. She ran up, threw herself into her father's arms, and cried out.—'Oh, how glad I am I have reached home to-night!'—then kissing both of her parents, she flung herself into a chair, saying,—'I am tired—very tired. I have ridden the livelong day—alone—and frightened out of my wits.'

'Not alone, my daughter, on that weary road,—and the country so troubled with ill-governed men!—Why did you venture, girl?—Why did you venture?—Did you not think I would send your cousin Christopher for you?'—

'Oh, father,'—replied Mary,—'there have been such doings!—Ah! and here is Mr. Horse Shoe Robinson:—major Butler, where is he, sir?'—she exclaimed, turning to the sergeant, who had now approached the back of her chair to offer his hand.—

'Blessings on you for a wise and a brave girl!'—said Robinson.—'But it wouldn't do—we were ambushed, and the major is still a prisoner.'

'I feared it,'—said Mary,—'and therefore, I stole away. They are bloody-minded and wicked, father,—and uncle Adair's house has been the place where mischief and murder has been talked of.—Oh, I am very sick—I have had such a ride!'

'Poor wench!'—said the father, taking her to his bosom.—'You have not the temper nor the strength to struggle where ruthless men take up their weapons of war. What has befallen?—Tell us all.'—

'No, no,'—interposed the mother,—'no Allen—not now. The girl must have food and sleep, and must not be wearied with questions to-night.—Wait, my dear Mary, until to-morrow. She will tell us every thing to-morrow.'

'I must hear of major Butler,'—said Mary,—'I cannot sleep until I have heard all that has happened.—Good Mr. Robinson, tell me every thing.'—

In few words the sergeant unfolded to the damsel the eventful history of the last two days, during the narrative of which her cheek waxed pale, her strength failed her, and she sank almost lifeless across her father's knee.

'Give me some water,'—she said.—'My long ride has

worn me out. I ran off at day light this morning and have not stopped once upon the road.'

A glass of milk with a slice of bread restored the maiden to her strength, and she took the first opportunity to inform the circle who surrounded her of all the incidents that had fallen under her observation at Adair's.—

Her father listened with deep emotion to the tale, and during its relation clenched his teeth with anger, as he walked, to and fro, through the apartment. There was an earnest struggle in his feelings to withhold the expression of the strong execration, which the narrative brought almost to his lips, against the perfidy of his wife's kinsman. But the habitual control of his temper, which his religious habits inculcated, kept him silent: and considerations of prudence again swayed him from surrendering to the impulse, which would have led him to declare himself openly against the cause of the royal government and its supporters in the district where he lived. He cross-questioned his daughter as to many minute points of her story, but her answers were uniform and consistent, and were stamped with the most unequivocal proofs of her strict veracity. Indeed, the collateral evidences furnished by Robinson, left no doubt on the miller's mind that the whole of Mary's disclosures were the testimony of a witness whose senses could not have been disturbed by illusions, nor distempered by fear.

'It is a dreadful tale,'—he said,—'and we must think over it more maturely. Be of good heart, my daughter,—you have acted well and wisely;—God will protect us from harm.'—

'And so it was no ghost, nor spirit,'—said Horse Shoe,—'that the major saw in the night? But I wonder you didn't think of waking me. A word to me in the night—seeing I have sarved a good deal on outposts, and have got used to being called up—would have had me stirring in a wink. But that's part of Wat's luck—for I should most ondoubtedly have strangled the snake in his bed.'

'I called you,'—said Mary,—'as loudly as I durst—and more than once, but you slept so hard!'

'That's like me too,'—replied Horse Shoe.—'I'm both

sleepy and watchful, according as I think there is need of my services.'

'Now to bed, my child,'—said Musgrove.—'Your bed is the fittest place for your wearied body—God bless you, daughter!'—

Once more the family broke up, and as Robinson left the room Mary followed him to the foot of the little stair that wound up into an attic chamber;—here she detained him one moment, while she communicated to him in a half whisper—

'I have a friend, Mr. Robinson, that might help you to do something for major Butler. His name is John Ramsay: he belongs to general Sumpter's brigade. If you would go to his father's, only six miles from here, on the upper road to Ninety-Six, you might hear where John was.—But, may be, you are afraid to go so near to the fort?'—

'May be so,'—said Robinson, with a look of comic incredulity.—'I know the place, and I know the family,—and, likely, John himself. It's a good thought, Mary,—for I want help now, more than I ever did in my life.—I'll start before day light—for it won't do to let the sun shine upon me, with Innis's Tories so nigh.—So, if I am missed to-morrow morning, let your father know how I come to be away.'—

'Tell John,'—said Mary,—'I sent you to him. Mary Musgrove, remember.'

'If I can't find John,'—replied Horse Shoe—'you're such a staunch little petticoat sodger, that I'll, perhaps, come back and enlist you.—'Tisn't every where that we can find such valiant wenches. I wish some of our men had a little of your courage—so, good night!'

The maiden now returned to the parlour—and Horse Shoe, under the guidance of Christopher Shaw, found a comfortable place of deposit for his hard-worked though—as he would have Christopher believe—his unfatigued frame. The sergeant, however, was a man not born to cares, notwithstanding that his troubles were 'as thick as the sparks that fly upward,'—and it is a trivial fact in his history, that, on the present occasion, he was not many seconds in bed before he was as sound asleep as the trapped

partridges, in the fairy tale, which, the eastern chronicle records, fell into a deep sleep when roasting upon the spit, and did not wake for a hundred years.

CHAPTER XXI.

'Now, if you ask who gave the stroke
I cannot tell, so mot I thrive;
It was not given by man alive'—*Lay of the last Minstrel.*

It was a little before day-break on Sunday morning, the fifteenth of August, (a day rendered memorable by the exploit of Sumpter, who captured, in the vicinity of Rocky Mount a large quantity of military stores, and a numerous escort, then on their way from Ninety-Six to Camden,) that James Curry was travelling in the neighbourhood of the Ennoree, some four miles distant from Musgrove's mill. He had, a few hours before, left the garrison of Ninety-Six, and was now hieing, with all haste to Blackstock's on a mission of importance. The night had been sultry, but the approach of the dawn had brought with it that refreshing coolness which is always to be remarked in the half hour that precedes the first blush of morning. The dragoon had had a weary night-ride, but the recent change of temperature had invigorated his system and given buoyancy to his spirits. This effect was exhibited in his first whistling a tune, then humming the words of a ditty, and, finally, in breaking forth into a loud, full song, which, as he had a good voice and a practised skill, increased in loudness as he became better pleased with the trial of his powers.—The song was occasionally intermitted to give room to certain self-communings which the pastime suggested.—

'You may take it for sooth, that wit without gold'
—he sang in the loudest strain, trying the words on different keys, and introducing some variations into the tune—

'Will make a bad market whenever 'tis sold.'—

'That's true;—your poor moneyless devil—how should
VOL. I. 23

his wit pass current? He was a shrewd fellow that wrote it down. Your rich man for wit, all the world over! and so the song runs:—

‘But all over the world it is well understood
That the joke of a rich man is sure to be good.’

True—true as the Gospel! Give the knaves dinners—plenty of Burgundy and Port—and what signifies an empty head?—Go to college, and how is it there? What is a sizer’s joke?—if the fellow have the wit of Diogenes, it is sheer impertinence. But let my young lord Cræsus come out with his flatulent nonsense,—oh, that’s the true ware for the market!—James Curry,—James Curry—what ought you to have been, if the supple jade fortune had done your deserts justice!—Instead of a d—d, dodging dragoon, obedient to the beck of every puppy who wears his majesty’s epaulets—but it’s no matter,—that’s past:—the wheel has made its turn, and here I am, doing the work of the scullion, that ought to sit above the salt-cellar. *Vogue la galere!*—We will play out the play. Meantime, I’ll be merry in spite of the horoscope:—come then—I like these words and the jolly knave, whoever he was, that penned them.—

‘You may take it for sooth that wit without gold’—

The singer was, at this instant, arrested at the top of his voice, by a blow against the back of his head, bestowed; apparently, by some ponderous hand, that so effectually swayed him from the line of gravity, as to cause him to reel in his saddle, and, by an irrecoverable impetus, to swing round to the ground, where he alighted on his back, with one foot attached to the stirrup, and the reins of his horse firmly held in his hand.—

‘Singing on Sunday is agin the law,’—said a hoarse voice, that came apparently from the air, as the darkness of the hour,—which was increased by an overcast and lowering sky, as well as by the thick wood through which the road ran,—prevented the stricken man from discerning any thing that might have done him harm, even if such thing had been bodily present. The soldier lay for a moment prostrate, under a panic produced by the suddenness of this mysterious visitation; and when, at

length, he regained his feet, he almost fancied that he heard receding from him, at a great distance, the dull beat of a horse's foot upon the sandy road.

Curry, who as a soldier was insensible to fear, now shook in every joint, as he stood beside his horse in a state of confused and ravelled wonderment. He strained his ear to catch the sound in the direction towards which he thought he had heard the retreating footsteps, but his more deliberate attention persuaded him that he was mistaken in his first impression. Still more puzzled as he came into the possession of his faculties, of which the abruptness of the surprise had almost bereft him, he stood for some time mute,—then drawing his sword with the alacrity of a man, who all at once, believes himself in danger of an uplifted blow, he called out loudly—

‘Speak and show yourself, if you be a man! Or if there be a party of banditti, let them come forth.—Who way-lays me?—Remember, I warn him, in the name of the king, that I am on his majesty's errand, and that they are not far off who will punish any outrage on my person.—By all the powers of Satan, the place is bewitched!’—he exclaimed, after a pause.—‘Once more, speak,—whether you are to be conjured in the name of the king or of the devil!’—

All remained silent, except the leaves of the forest that fluttered in the breeze; and it was with an awkward and unacknowledged sense of faint-heartedness that Curry put up his sword and remounted into his saddle. He first moved slowly forward in continuation of his journey; and, as his thoughts still ran upon the extraordinary incident, he applied spurs to his horse's side, and gradually increased his pace from a trot to a gallop, and from that to almost high speed, until he emerged from the wood upon a tract of open country. When he reached this spot the day had already appeared above the eastern horizon; and reassured, as the light waxed stronger, the dragon, by degrees, fell into his customary travelling pace, and resumed the equanimity of his temper.

About ten o'clock in the day he reached Blackstock's, where he arrived in a heavy rain, that had been falling for the last three hours, and which had drenched him to the

skin. So, rapidly dismounting and giving his horse into the charge of some of the idlers about the door, he entered the common room in which were assembled the greater part of the militia guard and of Habershaw's troopers. His first movement was to take the burly captain aside, and to communicate to him certain orders from the commanding officer at Ninety-Six, respecting the prisoner,—which being done, he mingled with his usual affectedly careless and mirthful manner amongst the throng.

Butler, through the intercession of Bruce, had been indulged with some mitigation of the restraints at first imposed upon him; and he was, at this moment, availing himself of the privilege that had been allowed him, on account of the leaky condition of the barn in which he had spent the night, to take his morning meal inside of the dwelling house. He was accordingly seated at a table, in a corner of the room, with some eatables before him in a more comfortable state of preparation than he had hitherto enjoyed. Two soldiers stood sufficiently near to render his custody effectual without much personal annoyance. As yet he had been unable to glean any thing from the conversation of those around him, by which he might form the least conjecture as to his probable destiny. His intercourse with his captors was restricted to the mere supply of his immediate wants. All other communication was strictly interdicted. Even Habershaw himself, seemed to be under some authoritative command, to deny himself the gratification of either exhibiting his own importance, or of wreaking his spleen upon his prisoner: and when Butler attempted to gain from Bruce some hint as to what was intended, the only answer he received was conveyed by the soldier's putting his finger on his lip.

Butler knew enough of Robinson's hardihood and venturesome disposition, to feel perfectly confident that he would make good his promise to be near him, at whatever personal hazard; and he was, therefore, in momentary expectation of receiving further intelligence from the sergeant in some of those strange, bold and perilous forms of communication, which the character of the trusty soldier warranted him in counting upon. His knowledge

that Robinson had passed by Blackstock's on the day preceding, gave him some assurance that the sergeant was in the diligent prosecution of his purpose to seek Sumpter, or some other of the partisan whig corps in their hiding places, and to try the hazardous experiment of his, Butler's, rescue from his present thralldom, by a vigorous incursion into the district where he was now confined. With this calculation of the course of events, he was prepared to hear, at every hour of the day, of some sudden alarm; and ready to co-operate, by seizing the first moment of confusion to snatch up a weapon, and force his way through the ranks of his guard. It was with such anticipations that now, whilst seemingly engrossed with the satisfaction of his physical wants at the table, he lent an attentive ear to the conversation which passed in the house between Curry and the company who were clustered around him. The dragoon, at first, in a light and merry vein of narrative, recounted to his hearers the singular visitation he had experienced before day break; and he contrived to fling over his story an additional hue of mystery, by the occasional reflections, with which he seasoned it, tending to inculcate the belief, to which he himself partly inclined, that the incident was brought about through the agency of some prankish and mischievous spirit,—a conclusion which, at that period, and amongst the persons to whom the adventure was related, did not require any great stretch of faith to sustain it. Some of his auditors fortified this prevailing inclination of opinion, by expressing their own conviction of the interference of malignant and supernatural influences in the concerns of mankind, and gave their personal experience of instances in which these powers were active. The conversation, by degrees, changed its tone, from that of levity and laughter into one of grave, and somewhat fearful interest, according to the increasing marvel which the several stories that were told, excited in the superstitious minds of the circle; and in the same proportion that this sentiment took possession of the thoughts of the company, they became more unreserved in their language and louder in the utterance of

it—thus giving Butler the full benefit of all that was said.

‘But, after all,’—said one of the men,—‘mightn’t you have been asleep on your horse, James Curry, and had a sort of jogging dream, when a limb of a tree, across the road—for it was a dark morning—might have caught you under the throat and flung you out of your saddle: and you, not knowing whether you was asleep or awake,—for a man who is on duty, without his night’s rest, sometimes can’t tell the difference—thought it was some hobgoblin business?’—

‘No,’—said Curry,—‘that’s impossible;—for I was singing a song at the time, and almost at the top of my voice.—I had been sleepy enough before that,—just after I left Ninety-Six, near midnight,—for I had ridden a long way;—but as it grew towards day-light I began to rouse up,—so that when this thing happened I was as much awake as I am now.’

‘Then it is a downright case of a ghost,’—said the other.—‘It knew you was upon a wicked errand,—and so, that back-handed blow was a warning to you. These things are sometimes meant to be friendly; and who knows but this oversetting you in the road, might have been intended to signify that you had better not meddle in cases of life and death? If you would take my advice, you would just treat this major Butler, that you made prisoner’—

Curry looked at the speaker with a frown, as he made a motion to him to be silent.—‘Remember where you are and who may hear you,’—he said in a cautious voice, as he glanced his eye towards Butler, who was leaning his head upon the table, as if in slumber.

‘Oh, I understand,’—replied the soldier of the guard.—‘I forgot he was in the room.’

‘The weather holds up,’—said Habershaw, who now walked into the house.—‘The rain has slackened;—and so, Orderly, if you have had a bite of something to eat, the boys had better be got ready to march. We have a long way to go, and as the infantry march with us we shall get on slowly.’

‘I think so, noble captain,’ replied Curry.—‘I shall be ready to join you before you get your line formed.’

Orders were now issued by Habershaw, both to the troopers of his own squad and to the militia detachment, to put themselves in condition for an immediate movement. The clouds, during the last half hour, had been breaking away, and the sun soon burst forth upon the wet and glittering landscape, in all the effulgence of mid-summer. During a brief interval of preparation the party of infantry and cavalry, that now occupied the hamlet, exhibited the bustle incident to the gathering of the corps: some ran to one quarter for their arms, others to the stables for the horses:—a cracked trumpet in the hands of a lusty performer, who here joined the troop, kept up a continual braying—and was seconded by the ceaseless beat of a slack and dull drum. There were some who, having put on their military equipments, thronged the table of the common room of the house, where spirits and water had been set out for their accommodation, and rude jokes, laughter and oaths were mingled together in a deafening clamour.

‘Move out the prisoner,’—shouted Habershaw,—‘he goes with the infantry afoot.—I’ll never trust another of the tribe with a horse.’

‘Follow, sir,’—said one of the sentinels near Butler’s person, as he faced to the right, with his musket at an ‘advance,’ and led the way to the door.

Butler rose, and, before he placed himself in the position required, asked—

‘Where is it your purpose, to conduct me?’—

‘Silence,’—said Habershaw, sternly:—‘obey orders, sir, and march where you are directed.’

Butler folded his arms, and looked scornfully at the uncouth savage before him, as he replied—

‘I am a prisoner, sir, and therefore bound to submit to the force that constrains me. But there will be a day of reckoning, both for you and your master. It will not be the lighter to him for having hired such a ruffian to do the business in which he is ashamed to appear himself.’—

‘Devil’s leavings—blasted Whig!’—screamed Habershaw, almost choked with choler,—‘dare you speak to me

so!—By my heart, I have a mind to cleave your skull for you! My master, sir!—You will find out, before long, who is master, when Hugh Habershaw has tied the knot that is to fit your neck.’

‘Peace villain!’—exclaimed Butler—‘I cannot come too soon, into the presence of those who claim to direct your motions.’—

Here James Curry interposed to draw off the incensed captain;—and Butler, having received another order from the officer of the guard, moved out upon the road, and took the place that was assigned him, between two platoons of the foot soldiers.

The troopers being mounted and formed into column of march, with Habershaw and his trumpeter at the head, and Curry in the rear, now moved forward at a slow gait, followed by the detachment of infantry who had the prisoner under their especial charge.

It was near noon when the party took up the line of march; and they prosecuted their journey southward, with such expedition as to tax Butler’s powers to the utmost, to keep even pace with them over roads that were in many places rendered miry by the late rain. Towards evening, however, the sun had sufficiently dried the soil to make the travel less fatiguing; and by that hour when the light of day only lingered upon the tops of the western hills, the military escort, with their prisoner, were seen passing through a defile, that opened upon their view an extensive bivouac of some two or three hundred horse and foot occupying a space of open field, encompassed with wood, and guarded in its rear by a smooth and gentle river.

The spot at which they had arrived was the camp of a partisan corps under the command of colonel Innis. A farm house was seen in the immediate neighbourhood, which was used as the head quarters of a party of officers. Numerous horses were attached to the trees that bounded the plain, and various shelters were made in the same quarter, in the rudest form of accommodation, of branches and underwood set against ridge-poles, that were sustained by stakes, to protect the men against the weather. Groups of this irregular soldiery were scattered

over the plain: a few wagons were seen collected in one direction; and, not far off, a line of fires, around which frequent parties were engaged in cooking food. Here and there a sentinel was seen pacing his short limits; and occasionally the roll of a drum and the flourish of a fife announced some ceremony of the camp police.

The escort marched quickly across this plain until it arrived in front of the farm house. Here a guard was drawn up to receive them; and as soon as the usual military salute was passed and the order to 'stand at ease' given, Habershaw put the detachment under the command of the lieutenant of infantry, and, accompanied by Curry, walked into the house to make his report to the commanding officer of the post.

In a few moments afterwards colonel Innis, attended by two or three military men,—some of whom wore the uniform of the British regular army,—came from the house, and passed hastily along the line of the escort, surveying Butler only with a rapid glance. Having regained the door, he was heard to say,—'It is very well: let the prisoner have a room above stairs. See that he wants nothing proper to his situation—and, above all, be attentive that he be kept scrupulously under the eye of his guard.'

When this order was given, the colonel retired with his attendants to his quarters, and Butler was forthwith conducted, by a file of men, up a narrow, winding stair, to a small apartment in the angle of the roof, where he was provided with a chair, a light, and a small though not uncomfortable bed. His door was left open, and on the outside of it, full in his view, was posted a sentinel. He was too weary even to be troubled with the cares of his present condition; and, without waiting, therefore, for food, or seeking to inquire into whose hands he had fallen, or even to turn his thoughts upon the mysterious train of circumstances that hung over him, he flung himself upon the couch and sank into a profound and grateful sleep.

CHAPTER XXII.

AN ADVENTURE WHEREIN IT IS APPARENT THAT THE ACTIONS OF
REAL LIFE ARE FULL AS MARVELLOUS AS THE INVENTIONS OF
ROMANCE.

DAVID RAMSAY'S house was situated on a by-road, between five and six miles from Musgrove's mill, and at about the distance of one mile from the principal route of travel between Ninety-Six and Blackstock's. In passing from the military post, that had been established at the former place, towards the latter, Ramsay's lay off to the left, with a piece of dense wood intervening. The by-way, leading through the farm, diverged from the main road and traversed this wood until it reached the cultivated grounds immediately around Ramsay's dwelling. In the journey from Musgrove's mill to this point of divergence, the traveller was obliged to ride some two or three miles upon the great road leading from the British garrison,—a road that, at the time of my story, was much frequented by the military parties, scouts and patrols that were concerned in keeping up the communication between the several posts which were established by the British authorities along that frontier. Amongst the whig parties, also, there were various occasions which brought them under the necessity of frequent passage through this same district, and which, therefore, furnished opportunities for collision and skirmish with the opposite forces.

It is a matter of historical notoriety, that immediately after the fall of Charleston, and the rapid subjugation of South Carolina that followed this event, there were three bold and skilful soldiers who undertook to carry on the war of resistance to the established authorities, upon a settled and digested plan of annoyance, under the most discouraging state of destitution, as regarded all the means of offence, that, perhaps, history records. It will not detract from the fame of other patriots of similar enthusiasm and of equal bravery, to mention the names of Marion, Sumpter and Pickens, in connection with this plan of keeping up an apparently hopeless partisan war-

•

are, which had neither the promise of men, money nor arms,—and yet which was so nobly sustained, amidst accumulated discomfitures, as to lead eventually to the subversion of the 'Tory ascendancy' and the expulsion of the British power. According to the plan of operations concerted amongst these chieftains, Marion took the lower country under his supervision; Pickens the south-western districts, bordering upon the Savannah; and Sumpter was allotted all that tract of country lying between the Broad and the Catawba rivers, from the angle of their junction, below Camden, up to the mountain districts of North Carolina. How faithfully these men made good their promise to the country, is not only written in authentic history, but it is also told in many a legend amongst the older inhabitants of the region that was made the theatre of action. It only concerns my story to refer to the fact, that the events, which have occupied my last five or six chapters, transpired in that range more peculiarly appropriated to Sumpter, and that the high-road from Blackstock's towards Ninety-Six, was almost necessary for communication between Sumpter and Pickens, as between the several British garrisons.

On the morning that succeeded the night in which Horse Shoe Robinson arrived at Musgrove's, the stout and honest sergeant might have been seen, about eight o'clock, leaving the main road from Ninety-Six, at the point where that leading to David Ramsay's separated from it, and cautiously urging his way into the deep forest, by the more private path into which he had entered. The knowledge that Innis was encamped along the river, within a short distance of the mill, had compelled him to make an extensive circuit to reach Ramsay's dwelling, whither he was now bent; and he had experienced considerable delay in his morning journey, finding himself frequently in the neighbourhood of all foraging parties of Tories, whose motions he was obliged to watch for fear of an encounter. He had once already been compelled to use his horse's heels in what he called, 'fair flight'—and once to ensconce himself, a full half hour, under cover of the thickest woods, by a swamp.—He now, therefore, according

to his own phrase, 'dived into the little road that scrambled down through the woods towards Ramsay's, with all his eyes about him, looking out as sharply as a fox on a foggy morning;'—and with this circumspection, he was not long in arriving within view of Ramsay's house. Like a practised soldier, whom frequent frays has taught wisdom, he resolved to reconnoitre before he advanced upon a post that might be in possession of an enemy. He therefore dismounted, fastened his horse in a fence corner, where a field of corn concealed him from notice, and then stealthily crept forward until he came immediately behind one of the out-houses.

The barking of a house-dog brought out a negro boy, to whom Robinson instantly addressed the query—

'Where is your master, you powder monkey?—stop that dog!'—

'Yaick—ya hound!'—cried the boy, aiming a blow at the dog's head with his hand.—'What is you making a fuss about!—Massa done gone, sa.'—

'Where?'—inquired the sergeant—

'Got on his critter, arter he done his breckfus, and started away, like all de world,'—

'Your mistress?'—

'She home, sa, shelling beans,'—

'Any sodgers or strangers there?'—

'All gone, sa,'—replied the negro:—

Robinson, having thus satisfied himself, as to the safety of his visit, directed the boy to take his horse and lead him up to the door.—He then entered the dwelling.

'Mistress Ramsay,'—said he, walking up to the dame, who was occupied at a table, with a large trencher before her, in which she was plying that household thrift which the negro described,—'luck to you, ma'am, and all your house! I hope you haven't none of these clinking and clattering bullies about you, that are as thick, over this country as the frogs in the kneading troughs—that they tell of.'

'Good luck—Mr. Horse Shoe Robinson!'—exclaimed the matron, offering the sergeant her hand.—'What has brought you here?—What news?—Who are with you?—For patience sake, tell me!'—

'I am alone,'—said Robinson,—'and a little wettish, mistress,'—he added, as he took off his hat and shook the water from it:—'it has just sot up a rain, and looks as if it was going to give us enough on't.—You don't mind doing a little dinner-work of a Sunday, I see—shelling of beans, I s'pose, is tantamount to dragging a sheep out of a pond, as the preachers allow on the sabbath—ha, ha!—Where's Davy?'

'He's gone over to the meeting-house on Ennoree, hoping to hear something of the army at Camden;—perhaps you can tell us the news from that quarter?'

'Faith, that's a mistake, mistress Ramsay. Though I don't doubt that they are hard upon the scratches, by this time. But, at this present speaking, I command the flying artillery. We have but one man in the corps—and that's myself; and all the guns we have got is this piece of ordnance, that hangs in this old belt by my side, (pointing to his sword)—and that I captured from the enemy at Blackstock's. I was hoping I mought find John Ramsay at home—I have need of him as a recruit.'

'Ah, Mr. Robinson,—John has a heavy life of it—over there with Sumpter.—The boy is often without his natural rest, or a meal's victuals; and the general thinks so much of him, that he can't spare him to come home.—I hav'nt the heart to complain, as long as John's service is of any account, but it does seem, Mr. Robinson, like needless tempting of the mercies of providence.—We thought that he might have been here to-day;—yet I am glad he didn't come—for he would have been certain to get into trouble.—Who should come in, this morning, just after my husband had cleverly got away on his horse, but a young cock-a-whoop ensign, that belongs to Ninety-Six,—and four great Scotchmen with him, all in red coats;—they had been out thieving, I warrant, and were now going home again. And who but they!—Here they were, swaggering all about my house—and calling for this—and calling for that—as if they owned the free simple of every thing on the plantation. And it made my blood rise, Mr. Horse Shoe, to see them turn out in the yard, and catch up my chickens and ducks, and kill as many as they could string

about them—and I not daring to say a word:—though, I did give them a piece of my mind, too.’—

‘Who is at home with you?’—inquired the sergeant eagerly.—

‘Nobody but my youngest boy, Andrew.’—answered the dame.—‘And then, the filthy, toping rioters,’—she continued, exalting her voice.—

‘What arms have you in the house?’—asked Robinson, without heeding the dame’s rising anger.

‘We have a rifle, and a horseman’s pistol that belongs to John.—They must call for drink, too, and turn my house, of a Sunday morning, into a tavern’—

‘They took the route towards Ninety-Six, you said, mistress Ramsay?’—

‘Yes,—they went straight forward upon the road.—But, look you, Mr. Horse Shoe,—you’re not thinking of going after them?’—

‘Isn’t there an old field, about a mile from here, on that road?’—inquired the sergeant, still intent upon his own thoughts—

‘Certain,’—replied the hostess.—‘You must remember the cobbler that died of drink on the road side?’

‘There is a shabby, racketty cabin in the middle of the field—am I right, good woman?’

‘Yes.’

‘And nobody lives in it.—It has no door to it?’

‘There ha’n’t been a family there, these seven years.’—

‘I know the place, very well,’—said the sergeant thoughtfully,—‘there is woods just on this side of it.’

‘That’s true,’—replied the dame:—‘but what is it you are thinking about, Mr. Robinson?’—

‘How long before this rain began, was it that they quitted this house?’

‘Not above fifteen minutes.’

‘Mistress Ramsay—bring me the rifle and pistol both—and the powder horn and bullets.’—

‘As you say, Mr. Horse Shoe,’—answered the dame as she turned round to leave the room,—‘but I am sure I can’t suspicion what you mean to do.’

In a few moments the woman returned with the weapons, and gave them to the sergeant.—

‘Where is Andy?’—asked Horse Shoe.

The hostess went to the door and called her son,—and, almost immediately afterwards, a sturdy boy, of about twelve or fourteen years of age, entered the apartment,—his clothes dripping with rain. He modestly and shyly seated himself on a chair near the door, with his soaked hat flapping down over a face full of freckles, and not less rife with the expression of an open, dauntless hardihood of character.

‘How would you like a scrummage, Andy, with them Scotchmen that stole your mother’s chickens this morning?’—asked Horse Shoe.

‘I’m agreed,’—replied the boy,—‘if you will tell me what to do.’

‘You are not going to take the boy out, on any of your desperate projects, Mr. Horse Shoe?’—said the mother, with the tears starting instantly into her eyes.—‘You wouldn’t take such a child as that into danger!’—

‘Bless your soul, mistress Ramsay, there ar’n’t no danger about it!—Don’t take on so. It’s a thing that is either done at a blow, or not done,—and there’s an end of it. I want the lad only to bring home the prisoners for me, after I have took them.’—

‘Ah, Mr. Robinson, I have one son already in these wars.—God protect him!—and you men don’t know how a mother’s heart yearns for her children in these times.—I cannot give another,’—she added, as she threw her arms over the shoulders of the youth and drew him to her bosom.

‘Oh it aint nothing,’—said Andrew, in a sprightly tone.—‘It’s only snapping of a pistol, mother,—pooh!—If I’m not afeard, you oughtn’t to be.’

‘I give you my honour, mistress Ramsay,’—said Robinson,—‘that I will bring or send your son, safe back in one hour; and that he shan’t be put in any sort of danger whatsomedever:—come,—that’s a good woman!’—

‘You are not deceiving me, Mr. Robinson?’—asked the matron, wiping away a tear.—‘You wouldn’t mock the sufferings of a weak woman in such a thing as this?’—

‘On the honesty of a sodger, ma’am,’—replied Horse

Shoe,—‘the lad shall be in no danger,—as I said before—whatsomedever.’

‘Then I will say no more,’—answered the mother.—‘But Andy, my child, be sure to let Mr. Robinson keep before you.’

Horse Shoe now loaded the fire-arms, and having slung the pouch across his body, he put the pistol into the hands of the boy;—then shouldering his rifle, he and his young ally left the room. Even on this occasion, serious as it might be deemed, the sergeant did not depart without giving some manifestation of that light-heartedness, which no difficulties ever seemed to have power to conquer. He thrust his head back into the room, after he had crossed the threshold, and said, with an encouraging laugh—‘Andy and me will teach them, mistress Ramsay, Pat’s point of war—we will *surround* the ragamuffins.’

‘Now Andy, my lad,’—said Horse Shoe, after he had mounted Captain Peter,—‘you must get up behind me. Turn the lock of your pistol down,’—he continued, as the boy sprang upon the horse’s rump,—‘and cover it with the flap of your jacket, to keep the rain off.—It won’t do to hang fire at such a time as this.’

The lad did as he was directed, and Horse Shoe having secured his rifle in the same way, put his horse up to a gallop and took the road in the direction that had been pursued by the soldiers.

As soon as our adventurers had gained a wood, at the distance of about half a mile, the sergeant relaxed his speed and advanced at a pace but little above a walk.

‘Andy,’—he said.—‘We have got rather a ticklish sort of a job, before us—so I must give you your lesson, which you will understand better by knowing something of my plan. As soon as your mother told me that these thieving villains had left her house about fifteen minutes before the rain came on,—and that they had gone along upon this road, I remembered the old field up here, and the little log hut in the middle of it; and it was natural to suppose that they had just got about near that hut, when this rain came up,—and then, it was the most supposable case in the world, that they would naturally go

into it, as the driest place they could find. So now, you see, it's my calculation that the whole batch is there at this very point of time. We will go slowly along, until we get to the other end of this wood, in sight of the old field—and then, if there is no one on the look-out, we will open our first trench;—you know what that means, Andy?"—

'It means, I s'pose, that we'll go right smack at them,'—replied Andrew.—

'Pretty exactly,'—said the sergeant.—'But listen to me. Just at the edge of the woods you will have to get down, and put yourself behind a tree: I'll ride forward, as if I had a whole troop at my heels,—and if I catch them, as I expect, they will have a little fire kindled and, as likely as not, they'll be cooking some of your mother's fowls.'

'Yes—I understand,'—said the boy eagerly—

'No you don't,'—replied Horse Shoe;—'but you will when you hear what I am going to say. If I get at them onawares, they'll be mighty apt to think they are surrounded, and will bellow, like fine fellows, for quarters. And, thereupon, Andy, I'll cry out 'stand fast,'—as if I was speaking to my own men;—and when you hear that, you must come up full tilt,—because it will be a signal to you that the enemy has surrendered.—Then it will be your business to run into the house and bring out the muskets, as quick as a rat runs through a kitchen: and when you have done that,—why, all's done. But if you should hear any popping of fire-arms—that is, more than one shot, which I may chance to let off—do you take that for a bad sign, and get away as fast as you can heel it. You comprehend?"

'Oh yes,'—replied the lad,—'and I'll do what you want,—and more too, may be, Mr. Robinson.'

'Captain Robinson,—remember, Andy;—you must call me captain, in the hearing of these Scotsmen.'

'I'll not forget that neither,'—answered Andrew.

By the time that these instructions were fully impressed upon the boy, our adventurous forlorn hope, as it may fitly be called, had arrived at the place which Horse Shoe had designated for the commencement of active operations. They had a clear view of the old field; and it af-

forded them a strong assurance that the enemy was exactly where they wished him to be, when they discovered smoke arising from the chimney of the hovel. Andrew was instantly posted behind a tree, and Robinson only tarried a moment to make the boy repeat the signals agreed on, in order to ascertain that he had them correctly in his memory. Being satisfied from this experiment that the intelligence of young Ramsay might be depended upon, he galloped across the intervening space, and, in a few seconds, abruptly reined up his steed, in the very doorway of the hut. The party within was gathered around a fire at the further end; and, in the corner opposite the door, were four muskets thrown together against the wall. To spring from his saddle, thrust himself one pace inside of the door, and to level his rifle at the group beside the fire, was a movement which the sergeant executed in an instant,—shouting at the same time—

‘Surrender to captain Robinson of the Free Will Volunteers, and to the Continental Congress,—or you are all dead men!—Halt,’—he vociferated, in a voice of thunder, as if speaking to a corps under his command;—‘file off, cornet, right and left, to both sides of the house.—The first man that budges a foot from that there fire place, shall have fifty balls through his body.’—

‘To arms!’—cried the young officer who commanded the squad inside of the house.—‘Leap to your arms, men! Why do you stand, you villains?’—he added, as he perceived his men hesitate to move towards the corner, where the muskets were piled.—

‘I don’t want your blood, young man,’—said Robinson, coolly, as he still levelled his rifle at the officer,—‘nor that of your people:—but, by my father’s son, I’ll not leave one of you to be put upon a muster roll, if you move an inch!’—

Both parties now stood, for a brief space, eyeing each other, in a fearful suspense, during which there was an expression of mixed doubt and anger visible on the countenances of the soldiers, as they surveyed the broad proportions, and met the stern glance of the sergeant; whilst

the delay, also, began to raise an apprehension in the mind of Robinson that his stratagem would be discovered.

‘Upon him—at the risk of your lives!’—cried the officer:—and, on the instant, one of the soldiers moved rapidly towards the farther wall; upon which the sergeant, apprehending the seizure of the weapons, sprang forward, in such a manner as would have brought his body immediately before them,—but a decayed plank in the floor caught his foot and he fell to his knee. It was a lucky accident,—for the discharge of a pistol, by the officer, planted a bullet in the log of the cabin, which would have been lodged, full in the square breast of the gallant Horse Shoe, if he had retained his perpendicular position. His footing, however, was recovered almost as soon as it was lost, and the next moment found him bravely posted in front of the fire-arms, with his own weapon thrust almost into the face of the foremost assailant. The hurry, confusion and peril of the crisis did not take away his self possession,—but he now found himself unexpectedly thrown into a situation of infinite difficulty, where all the chances of the fight were against him.—

‘Back men, and guard the door.’—he cried out, as if again addressing his troop.—‘Sir, I will not be answerable for consequences, if my troopers once come into this house. If you hope for quarter, give up on the spot.’—

‘His men have retreated,’—cried one of the soldiers.—‘Upon him, boys!’—and instantly two or three pressed upon the sergeant, who, seizing his rifle in both hands, bore them back by main force, until he had thrown them prostrate on the floor.—He then leaped towards the door with the intention of making good his retreat.

‘Shall I let loose upon them, captain?’—said Andrew Ramsay, now appearing most unexpectedly to Robinson, at the door of the hut.—‘Come on my brave boys!’—he shouted as he turned his face towards the field.—

‘Keep them outside of the door—stand fast,’—cried the doughty sergeant again, with admirable promptitude, in the new and sudden posture of his affairs caused by this opportune appearance of the boy.—‘Sir, you see that you are beaten—let me warn you once more, to save the lives of your men—its onpossible for me to keep my

people off a minute longer. What signifies fighting five to one?"

During this appeal the sergeant was ably seconded by the lad outside, who was calling out first on one name, and then on another as if in the presence of a troop. The device succeeded, and the officer within, believing the forbearance of Robinson to be real, at length said—

"Lower your rifle, sir.—In the presence of a superior force, taken by surprise and without arms, it is my duty to save blood-shed. With the promise of fair usage and the rights of prisoners of war, I surrender this little foraging party under my command."

"I'll make the terms agreeable,"—replied the sergeant.—"Never doubt me, sir. Right hand file, advance, and receive the arms of the prisoners!"—

"I'm here, captain,"—said Andrew in a conceited tone, as if it were a mere occasion of merriment;—and the lad quickly entered the house and secured the weapons, retreating with them some paces from the door.

"Now, sir,"—said Horse Shoe, to the Ensign—"your sword, and whatever else you mought have about you of the ammunitions of war!"

The officer delivered up his sword and a pair of pocket pistols.—

"Private property, I presume, will be protected,"—he said.

"Ondoubtedly,"—replied Robinson:—"your name?—if I mought take the freedom?"—

Ensign St. Jermyn, of his Majesty's seventy-first regiment of light infantry?—

"Ensign, your sarvant,"—added Horse Shoe, aiming at an unusual exhibition of politeness. "You have defended your post like an old sodger, although you ha'n't much beard upon your chin;—I'll certify for you. But, seeing you have given up, you shall be treated like a man who has done his duty. You will walk out now, and form yourselves in line at the door. I'll engage my men shall do you no harm:—they are of a marcifal breed?"—

When the little squad of prisoners submitted to this command, and came to the door, they were stricken with

the most profound astonishment to find, in place of the large detachment of cavalry which they expected to see, nothing but one horse, one man and one boy. Their first emotions were expressed in curses, which were even succeeded by laughter from one or two of the number. There seemed to be a disposition, on the part of some, to resist the authority that now controlled them; and sundry glances were exchanged, which indicated a purpose to turn upon their captors. The sergeant no sooner perceived this, than he halted, raised his rifle to his breast, and, at the same instant, gave Andrew Ramsay an order to retire a few paces, and to fire one of the captured pieces at the first man who opened his lips:—

‘By my hand,’—he said,—‘if I find any trouble in taking you, all five, safe away, from this here house, I will thin your numbers with your own muskets!—And that’s as good as if I had sworn to it.’

‘You have my word, sir,’—said the Ensign.—‘Lead on—we’ll follow.’

‘By your leave—my pretty gentleman—you will lead, and I’ll follow,’—replied Horse Shoe.—‘It may be a new piece of drill to you—but the custom is to give the prisoners the post of honour, and to walk them in front.’

‘As you please, sir,’—answered the Ensign.—‘Where do you take us?’—

‘You will march back the road you came,’—said the sergeant.

Finding the conquerer determined to execute summary martial law upon the first who should mutiny, the prisoners now marched in double files from the hut, back towards Ramsay’s,—Horse Shoe, with Captain Peter’s bridle dangling over his arm, and his gallant young auxiliary Andrew, laden with double the burden of Robinson, Crusoe, (having all the fire-arms packed upon his shoulders,) bringing up the rear. In this order victors and vanquished returned to David Ramsay’s.

‘Well, I have brought you your ducks and chickens back, mistress,’—said the sergeant, as he halted his prisoners at the door,—and what’s more, I have brought home a young sodger that’s worth his weight in gold.’

‘Heaven bless my child!—my boy, my brave boy!’—

cried the mother, seizing the lad Andrew in her arms, and unheeding any thing else in the present perturbation of her feelings.—‘I feared ill would come of it: but Heaven has preserved him. Did he behave handsomely, Mr. Robinson?—But I am sure he did.’—

‘A little more venturesome, ma’am, than I wanted him to be,’—replied Horse Shoe.—‘But he did excellent service. These are his prisoners, mistress Ramsay—I should never have got them, if it hadn’t been for Andy. In these drumming and fifeing times the babies suck in quarrel with their mother’s milk. Show me another boy in America that’s made more prisoners than there was men to fight them with—that’s all! He’s a first rate chap, mistress Ramsay—take my word for it.’

CHAPTER XXIII.

SHOWING HOW A GOOD SOLDIER WILL TURN THE ACCIDENTS OF WAR TO THE BEST ACCOUNT. ENSIGN ST. JERMYN IN A DISAGREEABLE DILEMMA.

ROBINSON having thus completely succeeded in the object of his enterprise, now found himself in circumstances of peculiar perplexity in regard to the disposal of his prisoners. Here he was, in the neighbourhood of the British posts;—in a district of country of which the enemy might be said to have, at this moment, undisputed possession—for Horse Shoe himself was almost the only belligerent in the field against them; and, more than that, he was but a few miles distant from a camp whose scouts had chased him almost to his present place of refuge. It was scarcely probable, therefore, that he could hope to retain his captives long under his control, or prevent the enemy from receiving intelligence of the capture. He was, however, notwithstanding these embarrassments, as usual, cheerful, confident and self-possessed. He had no wish or motive to detain the private soldiers as prisoners of war, and would at once have dismissed them, if he could have assured himself that they would not make the earliest use of their liberty to convey information of their

misadventure to the first corps of loyalists they should meet, and thus get up a hot pursuit of him through the whole district. But he had cogent and most important reasons for holding the ensign, St. Jermyn, in close custody: it instantly occurred to him that this prisoner might be used to control the procedure that should be adopted by those who meditated injury to Arthur Butler; and he, therefore, at once formed the resolution of communicating with the nearest British authorities, in order to assure them that he would retaliate upon the young officer any pain that might be inflicted upon his late comrade. His plan was speedily formed; it was to keep his prisoners until night-fall, move off, under cover of the darkness, to some remote and concealed spot with St. Jermyn, and release the others on their parole not to take up arms until regularly exchanged.

Whilst the sergeant was deliberating over these arrangements, the prisoners were allowed to shelter themselves from the rain, under a shed near the door of the dwelling, where Andrew, with all the pride and importance of his new station, marched to and fro, before them, like a trained sentinel. There was a small, log building in the yard of Ramsay's mansion, which had been, recently erected as a store-house, and which being well secured at the door by a padlock, Robinson determined to convert it, for the nonce, into a prison. It contained but one room, not above twelve feet square, with an earthen floor, and received no light except such as was admitted under the door, and through a few crannies about the roof. Into this narrow apartment the soldiers were now marched; a bundle of straw was thrown upon the floor; sundry fitches of bacon, that hung around the walls, were removed, and a few comforts, in the way of food and drink, were supplied to render the accommodation as tolerable to the inmates as was compatible with their safe custody. This being done, our friend Andrew was posted in the passage-way of the dwelling, in full view of the door of the store-house, which was carefully locked, with a musket in his hand, and with orders to make a circuit every five minutes round the little building, to guard against any attempts at escape by undermining the foundation.

As noon approached the weather began to clear up, and with the first breaking forth of the sun, came David Ramsay, the proprietor of the farm which was the scene of the present operations. His recognition of Horse Shoe Robinson was accompanied by a hearty greeting, and with an expression of wonder that he should have ventured, in hostile guise, through a country so beset, as this was, by the forces of the enemy; but when he heard the narrative of the exploit of the morning, and saw the trophies of its success, in the weapons piled against the wall; and, more especially, when he received from the lips of his wife, a circumstantial account of the part which had been performed in this adventure by his son Andrew, his delight seemed almost to be absorbed by his astonishment and incredulity. The proofs, however, were all around him, and after assuring himself, by an actual inspection of the prisoners through one of the chinks of the store-house, he came into his own parlour, sat down and laughed out-right.

Ramsay was a staunch friend of the independence of his country; and although he had not taken up arms in the cause, he gave it all the aid he could by the free expression of opinion, and by a resolute refusal to comply with the requisitions of the loyalists. His eldest son had joined Sumpter, and had already been active in the field; and he himself looked, with an almost certain expectation, to see visited upon himself that proscription, under which thousands were already suffering, and which he had only escaped as yet by the temporising delays of his opponents, or by their neglect, arising out of the incessant hurry and pressure of their military operations in the organization of the new dominion which the royal forces had but lately acquired. He was a man of a sturdy frame,—now only in the prime of life,—brave, thoughtful and intelligent, and firmly resolved to stand by his principles through whatever adverse chances. The present aspect of affairs was, to his mind, almost decisive of his fate: the capture of these prisoners, made from information derived from his own family, and in which also his own son had been a principal agent;—their confinement, too, in his own house were facts of so unequivocal

a character as inevitably to draw upon him the prompt ire of the Tories, and compel him to assume the attitude and abide by the issues of a partisan. As he had faith in the justice of his quarrel, and a strong devotion to the principles upon which it was sustained, he did not hesitate in the crisis before him,—but heroically determined to meet the worst that might befall. He, therefore, in the present emergency, became a useful and efficient ally to Robinson, who opened to him the full history of Butler, and the course of measures he was about to pursue for the relief of that unfortunate officer.

We must now leave the sergeant holding watch and ward over his vanquished foes, and shift our scene to Musgrove's Mill.

The family of Allen Musgrove were in a state of great disquietude. Horse Shoe Robinson had disappeared before day-light, and when the miller and his nephew left their beds, a little after the dawn, the only intelligence they had of the departure of their guest was inferred from finding the stable door open and the sergeant's horse absent. This fact was explained when Mary met them at breakfast.—Horse Shoe had set out for Ramsay's to learn some tidings of John, and to enlist him in an effort to liberate Butler:—he had departed under cover of darkness to avoid molestation from Innis's scouts, and she, Mary Musgrove, had placed the key of the stable, the night before, in a place where Horse Shoe might find it.—Such was the extent of the maiden's information.—The day passed wearily upon her hands: she was anxious to hear something of Butler,—something of Horse Shoe,—and something—we may suppose—of John Ramsay. Frequently during the morning she and Christopher Shaw held secret conferences: they spoke in whispers: suspense, care and doubt were pictured upon her face; and as the rain pattered against the windows she oftentimes stood before them, and looked out upon the distant road, and across the wide fields, and then upwards to the clouded sky. The sun, at length, appeared, and his rays seemed to shoot a glimpse of joy into the breast of the maiden, as she walked forth to note the drying of the

roads, and to see the clear blue, which, in that climate, outvies the mellow and rich tints of a Tuscan heaven.

The day waxed,—and the birds sang, and nature was gay,—but the maiden was restless and unquiet:—the day waned,—and the sun rode down the western slope in gorgeous beauty;—but Mary was ill at ease, and thought little of the grand and glorious firmament. Her communications with Christopher Shaw, meantime, became more eager: she and her cousin were seen to wander near the mill;—then Christopher left her,—and, presently, he might be discerned leading two horses,—one bearing a side-saddle,—down to the margin of the stream. There was a short visit to the house by the young man,—a word whispered in the ear of the mother—a shake of her head, an expression of doubt, a final nod of assent,—and, in the next moment, Mary and Christopher were seen trotting off on horse-back, on the road that led towards Ramsay's.

When they had ridden some two or three miles, and had entered upon the high-road between Ninety-Six and Blackstock's,—somewhere near to that piece of haunted ground, where, on the morning of this very day, a goblin had struck down James Curry from his steed,—they descried a military party of horse and foot slowly advancing from the direction to which they were travelling. In a few moments they met the first platoon of the cavalry, headed by a trumpeter and the unsightly captain Hugh Habershaw. They were detained at the head of this column, whilst some questions were asked respecting the object of their journey, the troops in their neighbourhood, and other matters connected with the affairs of the times. Christopher's answers were prompt and satisfactory:—he was only riding with his kinswoman on a gossip's visit to a neighbour:—Innis's camp was not above two miles and a half away,—and the country in general was quiet, as far as he had the means of knowing. The travellers were now suffered to pass on. In succession, they left behind them each platoon of threes, and then encountered the small column of march of the infantry. Mary grew pale as her eyes fell upon the form of Arthur Butler, posted in the centre of a guard. Her feeling lest he

might not recognize her features, and guess something of her errand almost overpowered her. She reined up her horse, as if to gratify an idle curiosity to see the soldiers passing, and halted in a position which compelled the ranks to file off, in order to obtain a free passage round her. Every look seemed to be turned upon her as the escort marched near her horse's head, and it was impossible to make the slightest sign to Butler without its being observed.—She saw him, however, lift his eye to hers, and she distinctly perceived the flash of surprise with which it was kindled as he became aware of her features. A faint and transient smile, which had in it nothing but pain, was the only return she dared to make. An order from the van, quickened the march; and the detachment moved rapidly by. As Mary still occupied the ground on which she had halted, and was gazing after the retreating corps, she saw Butler turn his face back towards her;—she instantly seized the moment to nod to him and to make a quick sign with her hand, which she intended should indicate the fact that she was now engaged in his service.—She thought she perceived a response in a slight motion of Butler's head,—and now immediately resumed her journey, greatly excited by the satisfaction of having in this accidental rencounter, obtained even this brief insight into the condition of the prisoner.

The sun was set, when Mary with her convoy, Christopher Shaw, arrived at Ramsay's. Always an acceptable guest at this house, she was, now, more than ever, welcome. There was business to be done in which she could discharge a most important part; and the service of Christopher Shaw in reinforcing the garrison was of the greatest moment. When the intelligence regarding the movement of Butler to Innis's camp, was communicated to the sergeant, it suggested a new device to his mind, which he determined instantly to adopt. Butler was at this moment, he concluded, in the hands of those who had engaged the ruffians to set upon him at Grindall's ford, and it was not improbable that he would be summarily dealt with:—there was no time, therefore, to be lost. The sergeant's plan, in this new juncture, was, to *compel the young ensign to address a letter to the British*

commandant, to inform that officer of his present imprisonment, and to add to this information the determination of his captors to put him to death, in the event of any outrage being inflicted upon Butler.—This scheme was communicated to Ramsay, Shaw and Mary.—The letter was to be immediately written;—Mary was to return with it to the mill, and was to contrive to have it secretly delivered, in the morning, at Innis's head-quarters; and David Ramsay himself was to escort the maiden back to her father's house,—whilst Shaw was to attend the sergeant and assist him to transport the young ensign to some fit place of concealment. The private soldiers were to remain prisoners, under the guard of Andrew, until his father's return, when they were to be released on parole, as prisoners of war.

The plan being thus matured, Robinson went forthwith to the prison house, and directed ensign St. Jermyn to follow him into the dwelling. When the young officer arrived in the family parlour, he was ordered to take a chair near a table, upon which was placed a light, some paper, pen and ink.—

'Young man,'—said Robinson,—'take up that pen and write as I bid you.'

'To what end am I to write?—I must know the purpose you design to answer, before I can put my hand to paper.'

'To the end,'—replied Horse Shoe firmly, and with unwonted gravity,—'of the settlement of your worldly affairs, if the consarns of to-morrow should bring ill luck to a friend of mine.'

'I do not understand you, sir. If my life is threatened to accomplish an unrighteous purpose, it is my duty to tell you at once; that that life belongs to my king and if his interests are to suffer by any forced act of mine, I am willing to resign it at once.'

'Never was purpose more righteous, sir, in the view of God and man, than ours,'—said David Ramsay.

'I have a friend,'—added Horse Shoe, greatly excited as he spoke,—'who has been foully dealt by. Some of your enlisted gangs have laid an ambuscade to trap him: villainy has been used,—by them that ought to be ashamed

to see it thriving under their colours,—to catch a gentleman who was only doing the common duties of a good sodger; and by mean bush-fighting,—not by fair fields and honest blows—they have seized him and carried him to the camp of that blood-sucking Tory, colonel Innis.—I doubt more harm is meant him than falls to the share of a common prisoner of war.’—

‘I know nothing of the person, nor of the circumstances you speak about,’—said the ensign.—

‘So much the better for you,’—replied the sergeant:—‘if your people are brave sodgers or honest men, you will not have much occasion to be afraid for yourself;—but, by my right hand! if so much as one hair of major Arthur Butler’s head be hurt by colonel Innis,—or by any other man among your pillaging and brandishing bullies—I myself will drive a brace of bullets clean through from one of your ears to the other.—This game of war is a stiff game, young man,—but we will play it out.’

‘Major Arthur Butler’—exclaimed the officer, with astonishment,—‘is he taken?’

‘Ha!—you’ve hearn of him,—and know something, mayhap, of them that were on the look-out for him?’—

‘I cannot write,’—said the officer sullenly.

‘No words, sir,’—interrupted Horse Shoe,—‘but obey my orders,—write, what I tell you—or take your choice to hang this night on a tree by the road-side, to sarve as a scare-crow to keep thieves from the corn-field.—I give you five minutes law,—make the best of them.’

The ensign looked in Robinson’s face, where a frown of stern resolution brooded upon his brow,—and a kindling tempest of anger showed that this was not a moment to hazard the trial of his clemency.

‘What would you have the purport of my letter?’—asked the officer, in a subdued voice.

‘That you have got into the hands of the Whigs,’—replied the sergeant,—‘and that, if so be, any mischief should fall upon major Butler, by the contrivings of your friends,—you die the first minute that we hear of it.’

‘I have had no hand in the taking of major Butler,’—said the young St. Jermyn.—

'I am glad of it,'—answered Robinson,—'for your sake.—You will die with a better conscience.—If you had a hand in it, young man, I wouldn't ask you to write a line to any breathing man:—your brains should spatter that door-post.—Take up the pen and write,—or stand by the consequences.'—

The officer took up the pen,—then, hesitating a moment, flung it down, saying

'I will not write;—do with me as you choose.'

'A rope,'—said Robinson,—'David Ramsay, it is settled,—get me a cord—this night he swings in the wind.'

'For God sake,'—cried Mary Musgrove, as the sergeant took up a few strands of cord which Ramsay supplied.—'For God's sake, Mr. Robinson, spare him!—Mr. Ramsay will write a letter to colonel Innis, and it will do as well as if the gentleman put his own name to it.'—

'Girl, get you gone from the room,'—said Horse Shoe, coolly,—'this is no place for women.—I have said it—and by G—d I'll do it.—Come, sir, prepare.'—

Mary Musgrove fled precipitately out of the room in tears—and all stood for some moments, in deep silence.

'Oh God—oh God!'—ejaculated the young soldier, in bitterness of heart;—and covering his face with his hands, he threw his head upon the table, where he wept tears of agony.—At length, looking in the countenance of Robinson, he said—'I am young, sir,—not above twenty years,—I have a mother and sisters in England.'—

'We have no time to spare,'—interrupted Robinson,—'much less to talk about kinsfolk.—Major Butler has them that love his life more than e'er an English woman loves her son.—If they are brought to grief by the unnatural rascality of British officers, it matters nothing to me if every daughter and sister in England pines away of heart-sickness, for the loss of them that they love best. Take my advice, my lack-beard,'—added Robinson, patting him on the shoulder,'—and write the letter:—you have the chances of war in your favour, and may save your neck.'—

I will do your bidding, sir,'—said the ensign, after a pause.—'Under the compulsion of force, I agree to write;—and he once more took up the pen.—

'You speak now like a reasonable gentleman,'—said Horse Shoe,—'I pity you, friend, and will preserve you against harm, so far as it can be done in the circumstances of the case.'

The ensign then wrote a few lines, in which he communicated to colonel Innis, or to whatever officer his letter might be delivered, the straights in which he found himself, and the resolution of his captors to hold his life forfeit upon the event of any rigours, beyond those of an ordinary prisoner of war, imposed upon major Butler. When he had finished, he gave the paper to Robinson.—

'Read it aloud, Mr. Ramsay,'—said Horse Shoe, delivering the scrawl to his friend.—

Ramsay read what was written.

'It must be wrote over again,'—said Horse Shoe, after he had heard the contents.—'First, it must make no mention of his being only a few miles off—that must be left out:—secondly, my name need'n't be told—though if the runagates knowed he was in my hands, they wouldn't think his chance any thing better on that account.—Let him say that the Whigs have got him—that's enough:—and, lastly, he must write his own name in full at the bottom.—And, look you, young man, don't be scrawling out the lines in such a way that your own hand-write moughn't be known:—that must speak for itself, because upon this letter depends your life:—you understand?'—

'Give it me,'—said the ensign,—'I will write it as you desire.'

And again the unfortunate officer applied himself to the task that was imposed upon him; and in a short time produced a letter, which being subjected to the criticism of the bystanders was pronounced satisfactory.

As soon as this was done St. Jermyn was conducted into another apartment, and there confided to the guardianship of Christopher Shaw. Horse Shoe now took a light and the writing materials from the table, and repaired with David Ramsay—both of them being well armed—to the store-house, where the other prisoners were confined. After they had entered and closed the door, posting Andrew with his musket on the outside, Horse Shoe addressed the men in a gay and cheerful tone—

‘Come, my lads, as you are good, honest fellows, that can have no great love for these little country cabins,—judging by your bad luck and uncomfortable circumstances in that one where I found you this morning,—I have come to set you free. By the laws of war you have a right, if I choose to take it, to give me your parole. So now if you have a mind to promise me the honour of sodgers not to sarve again until you are fairly exchanged, you shall all leave this before day-break. What do you say to the terms?’—

‘We are all agreed,’—replied the men, with one accord.

‘Then write out something to that effect,’—said the sergeant to Ramsay.—‘You that can’t scratch like scholars, stick your marks to the paper,—d’ye hear?’

The parole was written out by Ramsay, and duly signed or marked by each of the four men. This being done, the sergeant informed them that exactly at three o’clock in the morning, the door would be opened, and they would be at liberty to go where they pleased, provided they pledged themselves to visit no post of the enemy within twenty miles, nor communicate any particulars relating to their capture or detention to any British or Tory officer or soldier, within seven days. This pledge was cheerfully given, and after a few words of jocular good nature were exchanged on both sides, Horse Shoe and his companion retired.

David Ramsay now ordered out his own and Mary Musgrove’s horse, with an intention to set out immediately for the mill.

‘Does major Butler know that you are in his neighbourhood?’—inquired Ramsay of the sergeant, before the horses were brought to the door.—

‘Oh, bless you, yes,’—replied Horse Shoe.—‘I left word for him yesterday at Blackstock’s, by giving the babbler there something to talk about, which I knew he would hear.’—And the sergeant went on to relate the particulars of his stop at that post;—‘and I sent him a message,’—he continued,—‘this morning, by James Curry, in the same sort of fashion. A little before day-light I heard the devil singing one of his staves, upon the road back here, so loud that he seemed to be frightened by

gho
cuti
ale
and
for
and
ret
it
ca
le
cl
f
a
a
i

ghosts or sperits;—so, I rode up fast behind him, and cuffed him out of his saddle—and then, away I went, like a leather-winged-bat.—I knowed the curnudgeon's voice, and I expect he knowed my hand, for he has felt it before. I'll be bound, he made a good story out of it;—and, as such things fly, I make no doubt it wasn't long reaching the ear of the major, who would naturally think it was me—whether James told my name or not—because he knows my way. It was as good as writing a letter to the major, to signify that I was lurking about, close at hand.—I never went to school, Mr. Ramsay, so I write my letters by making my mark. I can make a blow go farther than a word upon occasion,—and that's an old-fashioned way of telling your thoughts, that was found out before pen and ink.'—

'Well, Horse Shoe, you are a man after your own sort,'—replied Ramsay, laughing.—'Come, Mary, take the letter: our horses are at the door.'

'Good bye t'ye, David,'—said Horse Shoe, shaking Ramsay's hand,—'it may be some days before we see each other again.—Kit and me will be off with this young ensign, before you get back.' Don't forget the prisoners at three o'clock.—And a word, David,—where had we best take this young sparrow, the ensign, to keep him out of the way of these fellows that are scouring the country?'

'Leave that to Christopher Shaw,'—replied Ramsay,—'he knows every nook in the country.—So, now, friend Robinson, good night,—and luck go with you!'

It was a clear star-lit night, and every tree and pool sent forth a thousand notes from the busy insects and reptiles that animate the summer hours of darkness, when David Ramsay set out with Mary Musgrove for her father's house.

CHAPTER XXIV.

NEW DIFFICULTIES OPEN UPON BUTLER.

WITH the last notes of the reveillée every thing was stirring in Innis's camp. It was a beautiful, fresh morning; a cool breeze swept across the plain, and ever spray and blade of grass sparkled with the dew; whilst above, an unclouded firmament gave promise of a rich and brilliant mid-summer's day. The surrounding forest was alive with the twittering of birds; and the neighing of horses showed that this portion of the animal creation partook of the hilarity of the season. From every little shed or woodland lair, crept forth parties of soldiers, who betook themselves to their several posts to answer at the roll-call; and by the time the sun had risen, officers, on horseback and on foot, were seen moving hurriedly across the open plain, to join the groups of infantry and cavalry, which were now forming in various quarters for the purposes of the morning drill. Companies were seen in motion, passing through the rapid evolutions of the march, the retreat, and the many exercises of service. Drums were beating, the shrill fifes were piercing the air with their high notes, and, ever and anon, the harsh trumpet brayed from the farther extremities of the field. Picquet-guards were seen mustering on the edge of the camp—wearied and night-worn:—salutes were exchanged by the small detachments on service; and, here and there, sentinels might be descried, stationed at the several outlets of the plain, and presenting their arms as an officer passed their lines.

The troops that occupied this space were mostly of the irregular kind. Some were distinguished by ill-fitted and homely uniforms; others were clad in the common dress of the country, distinguished as soldiers only by their arms and accoutrements; but amongst them was also a considerable party of British regulars, clad in the national livery of scarlet. Amongst the officers, who were in command of the subordinate departments of this mixed and parti-coloured little army, were several who, from their costume, might be recognized as belonging to

regiments that had come from the other side of the Atlantic.

Colonel Innis himself was seen upon the parade, directing the movements of the frequent subdivisions that, under their proper officers, were practising the customary lessons of discipline. He was a tall, thin man of an emaciated complexion, with a countenance of thoughtful severity. A keen black eye seemed almost to burn within its orb, and to give an expression of petulant and peevish excitability,—like the querulousness of a sick man. A rather awkward and ungainly person, arrayed in a scarlet uniform that did but little credit to the tailor-craft employed in its fabrication, conveyed to the spectator the idea of a man unused to the pride of appearance that belongs to a soldier by profession; and would have suggested the conclusion, which the fact itself sustained, that the individual before him had but recently left the walks of civil life to assume a military office. His demeanour, however, showed him to be a zealous if not a skilful officer. He gave close attention to the duties of his command, and busied himself with scrupulous exactitude in enforcing all the observances necessary to the establishment of a rigorous system of tactics.

This officer, as we have before hinted, had been an active participator in the proceedings of the new court of sequestrations at Charleston; and had rendered himself conspicuous by the fierce and unsparing industry with which he had brought to the judgment of that tribunal, the imputed delinquencies of some of the most opulent and patriotic citizens of the province.

Amongst the cases upon which he had been called into consultation, was that of Arthur Butler, whose possessions being ample, and whose position, as a rebellious belligerent, being one of 'flagrant delict,' there was but little repugnance, on the part of the judges and their adviser, to subject them to the severest law of confiscation. The proceedings, however, had been delayed,—not from any tenderness to the proprietor, but,—as it was whispered in the scandal of the day,—on account of certain dissensions, amongst a few prominent servants of the British crown, as to which of them the privilege of a

cheap purchase should be extended. The matter was still in suspense, with a view (as that busy body, common rumour, alleged,) to reward a particular favourite of the higher powers with the rich guerdon of these good lands, in compensation for private and valuable secret services, rendered in a matter of great delicacy and hazard;—no less a service than that of seducing into the arena of politics and intrigue, an opulent and authoritative gentleman of Virginia, Mr. Philip Lindsay.

In consequence of the odious nature of the duty which colonel Innis had assumed to perform, he became peculiarly hateful to the Whigs; and this sentiment was in no degree abated when, relinquishing his occupation as a counsellor to the court at Charleston, he accepted a commission to command a partisan corps of royalists in the upper country.—He was at the juncture in which I have exhibited him to my reader, new in his command, and had not yet ‘fleshed his maiden sword:’—the day, however, was near at hand when his prowess was to be put to the proof.

Such was the person into whose hands Arthur Butler had now fallen.

After the morning exercises of the camp were finished, and the men were dismissed to prepare their first repast, the principal officers returned to the colonel’s head quarters in the farm house,—where, it will be remembered, Butler had been delivered by the escort that had conducted him from Blackstock’s. The ill-fated prisoner had slept soundly during the whole night; and now, as the breakfast hour drew nigh, he had scarcely awaked and put on his clothes, before he heard an inquiry,—made by some one below, of the orderly on duty,—whether the prisoner was yet in a condition to be visited;—and, in the next moment, the noise of footsteps, ascending the stair towards his chamber, prepared him to expect the entrance of the person who had asked the question.

A British officer, in full uniform, of a graceful and easy carriage, neat figure, and of a countenance that bespoke an intelligent and cultivated mind, made his appearance at the door. He was apparently of five or six and thirty years of age; and whilst he paused a moment, as with a

purpose to apologise for the seeming intrusion, Butler was struck with the air of gentility and refined breeding of the individual before him.

‘Major Butler, I understand, of the continental army?’—said the stranger.—‘The unpleasant nature of the circumstances in which you are placed, I hope will excuse the trespass I have committed upon your privacy.—Captain St. Jermyn, of his Majesty’s army, and lately an aid-de-camp of Lord Rawdon.’—

Butler bowed coldly, as he replied:—

‘To meet a gentleman,—as your rank and name both import—is a privilege that has not been allowed me, of late. Without knowing wherefore, I have been waylaid and outraged by bravoos and ruffians.—You, perhaps, sir, may be able to afford me some insight into the causes of this maltreatment.’

‘Even if it were proper for me to hold discourse with you on such a subject, I could only speak from common report,’—replied the officer,—‘I know nothing of your seizure,—except that, by the common chances of war, you have fallen into the hands of the ruling authorities of the province; and you will doubtless, as a soldier, appreciate my motives for declining any reference to the circumstances in which you have been found.—My visit is stimulated by other considerations,—amongst which is foremost a desire to mitigate the peculiarly uncomfortable captivity to which I am sorry to learn you have been subjected.’

‘I thank you,’—replied Butler,—‘for the intention with which your good offices are proffered; but you can render me no service that I should value so much as that of informing me why I have been brought hither,—at whose suggestion,—and for what purpose.’

‘I will be plain with you, major Butler. Your situation demands sympathy, however inexorably the present posture of our affairs may require the decrees of stern justice, in respect to yourself, to be executed. I feel for you, and would gladly aid you, to any extent which my duty might allow, in averting the possible calamity that may hang over you.—You are known as a gentleman of consideration and influence in the colonies.—I may fur-

ther add—as a brave and venturesome soldier. You are believed to have, more boldly than wisely, enterprised the accomplishment of certain schemes against the safety of his majesty's acknowledged government in this province; besides having committed other acts in violation of a faith plighted for you by those who had full authority to bind you,—thus bringing yourself within the penalties appropriate to the violation of a military parole,—if not within those of treason itself.'

'He lies in his throat,'—cried Butler,—'who charges me with forfeiture of plighted word or honour, in any action of my life. That I have arrayed myself against what you are pleased to term his majesty's acknowledged government in this province, I am proud to acknowledge, here in the midst of your bands, and will confess it at your judgment seat;—but if aught be said against me that shall be intended to attain my honour as a gentleman, I will, in the same presence and before God, throw the lie in the teeth of my accuser.—Aye, and make good my word, now or hereafter, wheresoever it may be allowed me to meet the slanderer.'—

'I do not condemn your warmth,'—said St. Jermyn, calmly,—'in a matter that so deeply stirs your self esteem; and only desire now to second it in all things wherein an honourable enemy may claim the support of those who themselves value a good name. The authorities of this post have considerably resolved to give you the benefit of a court of inquiry. And I hope you will take it as it was meant, in all kindness to you, that I have come, before the communication of an official order, to apprise you that charges will be duly exhibited against you, and a trial be instantly had. If you will accept of my services,—feeble and inadequate as they may be,—I would gladly tender them to afford you such facilities as the pressure of the present emergency may allow.'—

'To be tried!—when, and for what?—If the charge is that I carry on open war against those who are in the habit of calling me and my compatriots rebels—I am ready to confess the charge.—What need of court or trial?'—

‘There are graver and more serious offences than that imputed to you,’—said St. Jermyn.—

‘When am I to be informed of them,—and to what do they tend?’

‘You will hear them this morning;—when, I am sorry to add, the nature of our military operations also enforces the necessity of your trial.’

‘You can be of little service, if that be true,’—returned Butler, thoughtfully.—‘My cause can only be defended by my country, long after I am made the victim of this unrighteous procedure.’

‘There is one alternative,’—said St. Jermyn, with some hesitation in his manner,—‘which a mature deliberation upon your relations as a subject,—pardon me, for I do not deem this ill-timed rebellion to have obliterated them,—may present to your mind’—

‘Speak it,’—said Butler, vehemently,—‘speak out the base thought that is about rising to your lip,—if you dare. Prisoner as I am, I will avenge the insult on the spot with the certainty of loss of life. The alternative you suggest, is to dishonour me and all who are dear to me by the foul opprobrium of treason to my country. You would have me, I suppose, renounce the cause to which I have dedicated my life, and take shelter with the recreants that have crowded under the banner of St. George?’—

‘Hold!—remember, sir, that you are a prisoner,’—said St. Jermyn, with great coolness; and then after a pause, he added with a sigh,—‘I will not wound, by further converse, the exaggerated and delusive sense of honour which is too fatally predominant in your breast, and,—as I have found it,—in the breasts of many of your misguided countrymen. I came to serve you,—not to excite your feelings;—and I will now, even in your displeasure, serve you as far as the occasion may afford me means:—I pray you, call on me without reserve. For the present, believe me, in pain and sorrow I take my leave.’—

With these words, the officer retired.

Butler paced to and fro, through his narrow chamber, for some minutes, as his mind revolved the extraordinary and unexpected disclosures which had been made to him

in this short visit. A thousand conjectures rose into his thoughts as to the nature of the supposed charges that were to be brought against him. He minutely retraced all the incidents of his late adventures, to ascertain how it was possible to found upon them an accusation of violated faith, or to pervert them into an imputation of treason against the present doubtful and disputed authority of the self-styled conquerors of Carolina. If his attempt to join Clarke was treason, it could be no less treason in the followers of Gates to array themselves against the royal army;—and, that every prisoner hereafter taken in battle was to be deemed a traitor to the contested power of Cornwallis, seemed to be a pretension too absurd for the most inveterate partisans to assert. There was nothing in this review of his actions that the most ingenious malice could pervert into an offence punishable by the laws of war, by other rigour than such as might be inflicted upon an ordinary prisoner taken in arms. Still, there were unhappy doubts of some secret treachery that rose to his reflections:—the perfidy of Adair, manifestly the effect of a bribe;—the ambuscade promoted and managed by James Curry;—the bloody purpose of the brutal gang who captured him, frustrated only by the accidental fray in which Blake was wounded.—Then the ‘doubtful givings out’ which fell from the lips of some of the soldiers at Blackstock’s, of his case still being one of life and death;—the insinuation of the savage Habershaw, at the same place, conveyed in the threat of twisted hemp;—the knowledge which his present keepers affected to have of his rank and consequence, of his past life and present aims;—and, above all, his being brought for immediate trial, in a matter affecting his life, before the very man, now in the capacity of a military commander, who had heretofore been active in promoting the design of confiscating his estate;—all these considerations, although unconnected with any circumstance of specific offence within his knowledge, led him into the most anxious and melancholy forebodings as to the result of this day’s proceedings.—

‘I am doomed to fall’—he said—‘under some secret stroke of vengeance, and my country is to have in my

case another stirring appeal against the enormity of that iron rule that seeks to bow her head into the dust.—So be it!—The issue is in the hand of God, and my fate may turn to the account of the establishment of a nation's liberty.—Oh, Mildred, I tremble to think of thee!—Heaven grant, my girl, that thy fortitude may triumph over the martyrdom of him that loves thee better than his life!—

CHAPTER XXV.

A TRIAL.—A GRAVE ACCUSATION THAT STILL FURTHER CONFIRMS BUTLER IN HIS BELIEF OF A SECRET ENEMY.—A SUDDEN RESPITE.

BUTLER's baggage, ever since he left Robinson's habitation on the Catawba, had been divided into two parcels, one of which he carried in a portmanteau on his own horse, and the other had been stowed away in a pair of black leather saddle-bags that were flung across Captain Peter.—These latter sufficed, also, to enclose, in addition to the sergeant's own wardrobe, sundry stores of provender, which the careful appetite and soldier-like foresight of the trusty squire, had, from time to time, accumulated for their comfort upon the road-side. After the escape of the sergeant, this baggage had been kept with more scrupulousness than might have been expected from the character of the freebooters, into whose possession it had fallen; and now, when Butler had been surrendered up to the custody of colonel Innis, it was restored to the prisoner without the loss of any article of value. On this morning, therefore, Butler had thrown aside the rustic dress, in which he had heretofore travelled, and appeared habited as we have described him when first introduced to the reader.

After a very slight meal, which had been administered with more personal attention and consideration for his rank and condition than he was prepared to expect, an officer entered his apartment and communicated an order to him to repair to the yard in front of the quarters. Here he found a sergeant's guard mustered to receive him, and

he was directed to march with them to the place that had been selected for his trial. The spot pitched upon for this purpose was at the foot of a large mulberry, that stood upon the border of the plain, at a short distance from the house.

When the guard arrived with the prisoner, colonel Innis was already seated at the head of a table, around which were placed several officers, both of the regular and militia forces. Writing materials were also arranged upon the board,—and at the lower end, a few paces removed from it, stood a vacant chair. Behind this was erected a pile of drums, with one or two colours laid transversely across them. Sentinels were stationed at different points near this group; and, within their lines, were collected the principal officers of Innis's command. Somewhat more remote, a number of idle spectators were assembled,—amongst whom might have been discerned Habershaw, Curry, and many of the heroes who had figured at Grindall's ford. Captain St. Jermyn had taken a station a little to the left of the presiding officer at the table, and in the rear of those who appeared to have the management of the approaching procedure, and now stood with his arms folded, apparently an anxious and interested looker-on.

There was a thoughtful and even stern expression upon every face when Butler appeared,—and a silence that was scarce broken by the occasional whispers in which the several individuals present communicated with each other. The guard marched the prisoner around the circle, and inducted him into the vacant chair, where he was received by a quiet and cold inclination of the head from each member of the court.

For a few moments he looked around him with an intense and scornful gaze upon the assemblage that were to sit in judgment upon him, and bit his lip, as his frame seemed to be agitated with deep emotion:—at length, when every look was bent upon him, and no one breathed a word, he rose upon his feet and addressed the company.—

'I understand that I am in the presence of a military court, which has been summoned for the purpose of in-

quiring into certain offences, of the nature of which I have not yet had the good fortune to be informed, except in so far as I am given to infer that they purport treason.—I ask if this be true?"

The presiding officer bowed his head in token of assent, and then presented a paper which he described as containing the specification of the charges.—

'As an officer of the American army and the citizen of an independent republic,'—continued Butler,—'I protest against any accountability to this tribunal,—and, with this protest, I publish my wrongs, in the face of these witnesses, and declare them to arise out of acts disgraceful to the character of an honourable nation. I have been drawn by treachery into an ambuscade, overpowered by numbers, insulted and abused by ruffians.—I wish I could say that these outrages were practised at the mere motion of the coarse banditti themselves who assailed me; but their manifest subserviency to a plan, the object of which was to take my life, leaves me no room to doubt that they have been in the employ and have acted under the orders of a more responsible head'—

'Keep your temper, sir,'—interrupted Innis, calmly.—'Something is to be allowed to the excited feelings of one suddenly arrested in the height of a bold adventure—and the court would, therefore, treat your expression of such feelings at this moment with lenity. You will, however, consult your own welfare by giving your thoughts to the charges against you, and sparing yourself the labour of this useless vituperation.—Read that paper,—and speak to its contents.—We will hear you patiently and impartially.'—

'Sir, it can avail me nothing to read it. Let it allege what it may—the trial, under present circumstances will be but a mockery. By the chances of war, my life is in your hands—it is an idle ceremony and waste of time to call in aid the forms of justice, to do that which you have the power to do—without insulting heaven by affecting to assume one of its attributes.'—

'That we pause to inquire,'—replied Innis,—'is a boon of mercy to you. The offence of rank rebellion which

you and all your fellow madmen have confessed, by taking up arms against your king, carries with it the last degree of punishment. If, waiving our right to inflict summary pain for this transgression, we stay to hear what you can say against other and even weightier charges—you should thank us for our clemency.—But this is mispending time:—Read the paper to the prisoner,”—he added, addressing one of the officers at the table.

The paper was read aloud. It first presented a charge against the prisoner for violating the terms of the parole given at the capitulation of Charleston. The specification to support this charge was,—that by the terms of the surrender, general Lincoln had engaged that the whole garrison should be surrendered as prisoners of war, and that they should not serve again until exchanged. The prisoner was described as an officer of that garrison, included in the surrender, and lately taken in the act of making war upon his majesty’s subjects.

The second charge was that the prisoner had insinuated himself, by false representations of his object, into the territory conquered by the royal army; and that, in the quality of a spy, he had visited the family of a certain Walter Adair, with a view to obtain a knowledge of the forces, plans, movements and designs of the various detachments engaged in his majesty’s service in the neighbourhood of the Broad river.

Thirdly, that he had been active and assistant in producing the death of two good subjects of the royal government in a skirmish at Grindall’s ford.

Fourthly, and lastly, that he together with certain confederates, had contrived and partially attempted to execute a plan to seize upon and carry away a subject of his majesty’s government, of great consideration and esteem,—Mr. Philip Lindsay, namely, of the Dove Cote, in the province of Virginia. That the object of this enterprise was to possess himself of the papers as well as of the person of the said Philip Lindsay, and, by surrendering him up to the leaders of the rebel army, to bring upon him the vengeance of the rebel government,—thus expos-

ing him to confiscation of property, and even to peril of life.

Such was the general import and bearing of the accusations against the prisoner, expressed with great abundance of verbiage, and accompanied with much minuteness of detail. Butler listened to them at first with indifference, and with a determination to meet them with inflexible silence,—but as the enunciation of them proceeded, and the extraordinary misrepresentations they contained were successively disclosed, he found his indignation rising to a height that almost mastered his discretion,—and he was on the point of interrupting the court with the lie direct, and of involving himself in an act of contumacy which would have been instantly decisive of his fate. His better genius, however, prevailed, and smothering his anger by a strong effort of self-control, he merely folded his arms and abided until the end, with a contemptuous and proud glance at his accusers.—

‘You have heard the allegations against you, sir,’—said colonel Innis,—‘what say you to them?’—

‘What should an honourable man,’—replied Butler,—‘say to the foul aspersions which have been invented by base calumniators to attain his name? The first and second charges, sir,—I pronounce to be frivolous and false. The third—so far as it imputes to me resistance to the assault of a cowardly gang who sought to interrupt my journey, in which two miscreants were sent to their long account—I confess it. As to the last, sir, there are imputations in it that mark the agency of a concealed enemy, lost to every impulse of honour,—a base and wicked liar. Confront me, with that man, and let the issue stand on this—if I do not prove him to be, in the judgment of every true gentleman of your army, an atrocious and depraved slanderer, who has contrived against my life for selfish purposes, I will submit myself to whatever penalty the most exasperated of my enemies may invent. It was my purpose, sir, to remain silent, and to refuse, to any act of mine, to acknowledge the violation of the rights of war, by which I have been dragged hith. Nothing should have swayed me from that determinati

but the iniquitous falsehood conveyed in this last accusation.'

'We cannot bandy words with one in your condition,'—interrupted the president of the court,—'I must remind you again, that our purpose is to give you a fair trial,—not to listen to ebullitions of anger.—Your honour is concerned, in these charges,—and you will best consult your interest by a patient demeanour in your present difficulties'—

'I am silent,'—said Butler, indignantly taking his seat.

'Let the trial proceed,'—continued the president.—'You will not deny,'—he said, after an interval of reflection,—'that you are a native of Carolina?'—

'I can scarcely deny that before you,'—replied Butler,—'who, in my absence, as report says, have been busy in the investigation of my affairs.'—

'There are bounds, sir, to the forbearance of a court,'—said Innis sternly,—'I understand the taunt:—your estates, have been the subject of consideration before another tribunal; and if my advice were listened to, the process relating to them would be a short one.'—

'You are answered,'—returned Butler.

'Nor can you deny that you were an officer belonging to the army under the command of general Lincoln?'—

Butler was silent.

'You were at Charleston during the siege?'—inquired one of the court.

'In part,'—replied Butler,—'I left it in March, the bearer of despatches to congress.'—

'And you have already said that you were in arms on the night of the thirteenth, at Grindall's ford?'—continued the same questioner.

'I have said so, sir.'

'That is enough,'—interrupted Innis.—'The ninth article of the capitulation of Charleston runs thus—"all civil officers, and the citizens who have borne arms *during the siege* must be prisoners on parole,"—the case is evidently within that clause.'—

'I should say,'—interposed St. Jermyn,—'who now, for the first time, opened his lips,—'that the prisoner scarcely falls within that description:—the words "*during*'

the seige' would seem to point to a service which lasted to the end.—They are, at least, equivocal,—and, I doubt, Lord Cornwallis would be loth to sanction a judgment on such a ground.

Upon this ensued a consultation amongst the officers at the table, during which Butler was withdrawn to a short distance in the rear of the assemblage. Several of the unoccupied soldiers of the camp, at this stage of the trial, had crowded into the neighbourhood of the court, and the sentinels, yielding to the eagerness of the common curiosity, had relaxed their guard so far as to allow the spectators to encroach beyond their lines. Amongst those who had thrust themselves almost up to the trial table, were a few children, male and female, bearing on their arms baskets of fruit and vegetables, which had been brought within the camp for sale. A smart-looking girl, somewhat older than the rest, seemed to have gained more favour from the crowd than her competitors, by the temptation which she presented of a rich collection of mellow apples; and, perhaps, her popularity was in some degree increased by the soft and pleasant-toned voice in which she recommended her wares,—no less than by the ruddy, wholesome hue of her cheek, and an agreeable, laughing, blue eye that shone forth from the shade of a deep and narrow sun-bonnet, the curtain of which fell upon her shoulders and down her back.

'Buy my apples—gentlemen,'—said the pretty fruit-merchant, coming up fearlessly to colonel Innis in the midst of the consultation—

'Three for a penny—they are very ripe and mellow, sir.'

The colonel cast his eye upon the treasures of the basket, and began to select a few of the choicest fruit. Thus encouraged, the girl set her load upon the table, in the midst of the hats and swords with which it was encumbered, and, very soon, every other member of the court followed the example of the presiding officer, and became purchasers of the greater part of the store before them. When this traffic was concluded, the little huckster took up her burden and retired towards the groups of spectators. Seeing the prisoner in this quarter, she

walked up to him, courtesied, and presented him an apple which was gratefully accepted and the proffered return from him, in money, refused.

When about a quarter of an hour had elapsed, Butler was resummoned to his seat, and the court again proceeded to business. The inquiry now related to the second charge,—that, namely, which imputed to the prisoner the character of a spy in his visit at Adair's. To this accusation captain Hugh Habershaw and several of his troop were called as witnesses. The amount of the testimony given by them, was,—that, on the eleventh of the month, they had received information that a continental officer, whose real name and title was major Butler, but who was travelling in disguise and under an assumed name, from the Catawba towards the Broad river, in company with a well known, stark whig—a certain Horse Shoe Robinson—was expected, in a few days, to arrive at Wat Adair's. That Habershaw, hoping to intercept them, had scoured the country between the two rivers; but that the travellers had eluded the search, by taking a very circuitous and unfrequented route towards the upper part of Blair's Range and Fishing creek. That, on the night of the twelfth, the two men arrived at Adair's, unmolested; and, on the morning of the thirteenth, some of the woodman's family had met Habershaw and apprized him of this fact,—adding, further, that the prisoner had offered a bribe to Adair, to induce him to give information in regard to the movements of the loyalist troops in the neighbourhood, with a view to communicate it to a certain colonel Clarke, who had appointed to meet Butler and his companion somewhere on the upper border of the province. That, in consequence of this attempt, Adair had directed the prisoner towards Grindall's ford; and this intelligence being communicated to the witness, he had conducted his troop to that place, where he succeeded in arresting the prisoner and his comrade, with the loss of two men in the struggle. The narrative then went on to give the particulars of Horse Shoe's escape, and the other facts with which the reader is acquainted. This account was

corroborated by several witnesses, and, amongst the rest, by Curry.

Butler heard the testimony with the most painful sensations. There was just enough of truth in it to make the tale plausible, and the falsehood related to points which, as they were affirmed upon hearsay, he could not repel by proof. There was a common expression of opinion amongst the bystanders—who, in general, were inclined to take the side of the prisoner, in reference to the charges which were supposed to affect his life,—that this accusation, of Butler's acting the part of a spy, was sustained by the proof.—In vain did he protest against the injustice of being condemned on what was alleged to have been said by some of Adair's family: in vain did he deny that he had offered a bribe to Adair for information respecting the Tories; and equally in vain did he affirm, that he had asked of Adair nothing more than the common hospitality due to a traveller—and for which he had made him a moderate requital,—the only money the woodman had received from him:—the current was now setting violently against him, and it seemed impossible to stem it.

'It is but due,'—said captain St. Jermyn, a second time interposing in behalf of the prisoner,—'to the rank and character of major Butler,—since a portion of this testimony is at second-hand,—to take his own examination on these alleged facts. With permission, therefore, I would ask him a few questions.'—

'The court will not object'—said Innis, who throughout affected the air of an impartial judge.—

'It is true, major Butler, that you were at Adair's on the night of the twelfth?'—said the volunteer advocate of the prisoner.

'I was, sir.'—

'And you made no concealment of your name or rank?'—

'I will not say that'—replied Butler.—

'You were under a feigned name then, sir?'—inquired Innis, as St. Jermyn seemed a little confounded by the answer he had received—

'I was called Mr. Butler, sir,—my rank or station was not communicated.'

'Your dress?'

'Was an assumed one, to avoid inquiry'—

'This man, Horse Shoe Robinson'—said St. Jermyn,—
'was known to Adair as a whig soldier?'

'Well known,'—replied Butler;—'and I was also represented as belonging to that party. Adair himself, led us to believe that he was friendly to our cause'—

Here several members of the court smiled.—

'Had you met any parties of loyalists'—inquired Innis—'in your journey between Catawba and Broad?'

'We had,—more than one'—

'How did you escape them?'

'By assuming feigned characters and names.'—

'Your purpose was to join Clarke?'

'I am not at liberty to answer that question'—replied the prisoner.—'Suffice it, sir,—I was travelling through this region on a mission of duty. My purpose was to act against the enemy.—So far the charge is true, and only to this extent.—I came with no design to pry into the condition of the royal troops—I sought only a successful passage through a contested, though sadly overpowered country'—

'You offered no money to Adair'—said St. Jermyn again as if insisting on this point of exculpation—'but what you have already called a moderate requital for his entertainment.'

'None'—replied the prisoner—'except'—he added—'a few guineas to induce him to release, from most wicked torture, a wolf he had entrapped.'

'It will not do,'—said colonel Innis, shaking his head at St. Jermyn;—and the same opinion was indicated in the looks of several of the court.—

'I was at Walter Adair's, that night, and saw the gentleman there, and heard all that was said by him;—and I am sure that he offered Watty no money,'—said our little apple-girl, who had been listening with breathless anxiety to the whole of this examination, and who had now advanced to the table, as she spoke the words,—
'And I can tell more about it, if I am asked.'

‘And who are you, my pretty maid?’—inquired colonel Innis, as he lifted the bonnet from her head and let loose a volume of flaxen curls down upon her neck.—

‘I am Mary Musgrove, the miller’s daughter,’—said the damsel, with great earnestness of manner,—‘and Watty Adair is my uncle by my mother’s side—he married my aunt Peggy;—and I was at his house when major Butler and Mr. Horse Shoe Robinson came there.’

‘And what in the devil brought you here?’—said Habershaw, gruffly.

‘Silence,’—cried Innis, impatient at the obtrusive interruption of the gross captain.—‘What authority have you to ask questions?’—Begone sir.’—

The heavy bulk of Hugh Habershaw, at this order, sneaked back into the crowd.—

‘I came only to sell a few apples,’—said Mary.—

‘Heaven has sent that girl to the rescue of my life,’—said Butler, under the impulse of a feeling which he could not refrain from giving vent in words.—‘Pray allow me, sir, to ask her some questions.’—

‘It is your privilege,’—was the answer from two or three of the court;—and the spectators pressed forward to hear the examination.

Butler carefully interrogated the maiden to all the particulars of his visit; and she, with the most scrupulous fidelity, recounted the scenes to which she had been a witness. When she came to detail the conversation which she had overheard between Adair and Lynch, and the events that followed it, the interest of the by-standers was wound up to the highest pitch. There was a simplicity in her recital of this strange and eventful story, that gave it a force to which the most skilful eloquence might in vain aspire; and when she concluded, the court itself, prejudiced as the members were against the prisoner, could not help manifesting an emotion of satisfaction at the clear and unequivocal refutation which this plain tale inferred against the testimony of Habershaw and his confederates. Innis alone affected to treat it lightly, and endeavoured in some degree to abate its edge, by suggesting doubts as to the capacity of a young girl, in circumstances so likely to confuse her, to give an exact

narrative of such a complicated train of events. Every cross-examination, however, which was directed by him to test the accuracy of the maiden's story, only resulted in producing a stronger conviction of its entire truth. This concluded the examination on the second charge.

The third was confessed by Butler;—and the court now proceeded to the fourth and last accusation against him.

To this there was but one witness called—James Curry. In the course of the examination, this man showed great address and knowledge of the world. He gave some short account of himself. He had been a man born to a better condition of life than he now enjoyed. His education had been liberal, and his associations in life extremely various. It was to be inferred from his own relation, that he had fallen into some early indiscretion which had thrown him into the lowest stations of society, and that this original delinquency had prevented him from ever rising above them. He had served for many years in the army, and was present at the surrender of Charleston, being at that period a confidential servant, or man of business, to the young earl of Caithness, the aid-de-camp of Sir Henry Clinton. Upon the departure of that young nobleman with the rest of Sir Henry's military family, for New York, he had remained behind, and had taken a similar service to that which he had left, with another officer of some repute. 'There were state reasons,—he said,—why this gentleman's name could not now be communicated to the court.'—That, in the month of July, he had attended his master on a visit to Mr. Philip Lindsay, in Virginia; and whilst in the immediate vicinity of that gentleman's residence, at a small country tavern, he had accidentally become privy to the design of the prisoner, and the same Horse Shoe Robinson who had been mentioned before, to seize upon the person and papers of Mr. Lindsay: that these two persons had actually arrived at the tavern he spoke of, to commence operations. That he had overheard them digesting the whole plan; and he had no doubt they had allies at hand to assist in the scheme, and would have proceeded, that same night, to put it in execution, if he had not frustrated their design

at the risk of his life. That, with the view of interrupting this enterprise, he had lured Robinson, the companion of the prisoner, to walk with him at night to the margin of a small river near the tavern,—where he accused him of the treacherous design which he and his comrade had in view: that, in consequence of this, Robinson had endeavoured to take his life, which was only saved by a severe struggle; and that being thus discovered in their purpose, this man Robinson and the prisoner had made a hasty retreat towards Gates's head-quarters —

Such was in effect the narrative of James Curry, which was solemnly given upon oath. Butler was for some moments confounded with astonishment at the audacity of this falsehood. He urged to the court the improbability of the whole story. 'It would have been easy,'—he said,—'if I were hostile to Mr. Philp Lindsay,—which, God knows, there are most cogent reasons to disprove,—it would have been easy to procure his arrest without an attempt at violent seizure by me; I had only to speak, and the whole country around him would have united in treating him as an object of suspicion, on account of his politics.'—He admitted that he was at Mrs. Dimock's at the time spoken of;—that Robinson attended him there;—but all else that had been said relating to the visit, he affirmed to be utterly false. He gave the particulars of the meeting between Horse Shoe and the witness, as he had it from Robinson; and spoke also of his knowledge of the visit of Tyrrel at the Dove Cote,—which person,'—he said,—'he had reason to believe, came under a name not his own.'

'How do you happen to be so familiar,'—inquired Innis,—'with the affairs of Mr. Lindsay?'—

'That question,'—replied Butler,—'as it refers to matters entirely private and personal, I must decline to answer.'

Curry, upon a second examination, re-affirmed all he had said before, and commented, with a great deal of dexterity, upon Butler's statement,—particularly in reference to such parts of it, as the prisoner's repeated refusal to answer, had left in doubt. After a protracted examination upon this point, the trial was, at length, closed,—and

Butler was ordered back to his apartment in the farmhouse.

Here he remained for the space of half an hour,—an interval that was passed by him in the most distressing doubt and anxiety.—The whole proceeding of the court boded ill for him. The haste of his trial, the extraordinary nature of the charges, and the general unsympathising demeanour of the court itself, only spoke to his mind as evidences of a concealed hostility which sought to find a plausible pretext for making him a sacrifice to some private malevolence.—He was therefore prepared to expect the worst when, at the close of the half hour, St. Jermyn entered his chamber.

‘I come, sir,’—said the officer,—‘to perform a melancholy duty. The court have just concluded their deliberations’.—

‘And I am to be a sacrifice to their vengeance.—Well, so be it!—There was little need of deliberation in my case,—and they have soon despatched it,’—said Butler, with a bitter spirit, as he paced up and down his narrow chamber,—‘What favour have these, my impartial judges, vouchsafed to me in my last moment.—Shall I die as a common felon on a gibbet,—or am I to meet a soldier’s doom?’

‘That has been thought of,’—said St. Jermyn.—‘The commanding officer has no disposition to add an unnecessary severity to your unhappy fate.’

‘Thank God, for that!—and that the files detailed for this service are to be drawn from the ranks of my enemies! I will face them as proudly as I have ever done on the field of battle.—Leave me, sir, I have matters in my thought that require I should be alone.’

‘Your time, I fear, is brief,’—said St. Jermyn.—‘The guard is already at hand to conduct you to the court, who only stay to pass sentence. I came before, to break this unhappy news to you.’—

‘It is no news to me,’—interrupted Butler.—‘I could expect no other issue to the wicked design by which I have been seized. This solemn show of a trial was only got up to give colour to a murderous act which has been long predetermined.’—

At this moment, the heavy and regular tap of the drum, struck at equal intervals, and a mournful note from a fife, reached the prisoner's ear.

'I come—I come!'—exclaimed Butler.—'These fellows are practising their manual, for an occasion in which they appear impatient to act.—One would think, captain St. Jermyn,'—he added with a smile of scorn,—'that they needed but little practice to accomplish them for a ceremony which has of late, since his Majesty has extended his merciful arm over this province, grown to be a familiar piece of military punctilio.'—

St. Jermyn hastily fled from the room, and rushing out upon the grass-plot, where the guard was collected, drew his sword, as he cried out:—

'Silence, you base and worthless knaves! Is it thus you would insult the sufferings of an unfortunate enemy by drumming, under his very ear, your cursed death-notes! Strike but one note upon that drum again, and, by my soul, I will cleave you to the earth!'

'The music did but try a flourish of the dead march,'—replied the sergeant of the guard,—'they are a little rusty, and seeing that the whig officer,'—

'Another word, sir, and you shall be sent to the provost-marshal.—Attend the prisoner.'—

'I am here,'—said Butler, who had overheard this conversation, and had already descended to the door.

With a mournful and heavy heart, though with a countenance that concealed his emotions under an air of proud defiance, he took his place in the rank, and marched to the spot where the court were yet assembled.

'A chair for the prisoner,'—said some of the individuals present, with an officious alacrity to serve him.'—

'I would rather stand,'—replied Butler;—'it is my pleasure to hear the behests of my enemies in the attitude that a soldier would choose to meet his foe in the field.'—

'Mine is a painful duty, major Butler,'—said Innis rising, as he addressed the prisoner:—'It is to announce to you, that, after a full and most impartial trial,—in which you have had the advantage of the freest examination of witnesses, and every favour accorded to you

which the usages and customs of war allow—you have been found guilty of two of the charges imputed to you in the list with which you were furnished this morning. Notwithstanding the satisfactory testimony which was given in your behalf, by the girl Mary Musgrove, in relation to your conduct at the house of Adair,—and however disposed the court were to abandon an accusation which thus seemed to be refuted—it has occurred to them upon subsequent reflection that, by your own confession—given, sir, permit me to say, with the frankness of a soldier—you came into this district in disguise and under false names, and thus enabled yourself to collect information, relative to the condition of the royal forces, which it was doubtless your purpose to use to our detriment. The court for a moment might have led you to entertain hope that they were satisfied that in this charge you had been wronged. The simple, affecting, and no doubt, true narrative made by the miller's daughter, produced a momentary sensation that was too powerful to be combatted:—that narrative, however, does not relieve you from the effect of your own confessions, since both may be true, and the charge still remain unimpaired against you.—

‘The offence of breaking your parole and infringing the terms of the capitulation of Charleston, is open to a legal doubt, and, therefore, in tenderness to you has not been pressed; although the court think that the very circumstance of its doubtful character, should have inculcated upon you the necessity of the most scrupulous avoidance of service in the conquered province.

‘The last charge against you is fully proved:—not a word of counter evidence has been offered. Strictly speaking, by the usages of war this would not be an offence for the notice of a military tribunal. The perpetrators of it would be liable to such vindictive measures as the policy of the conqueror might choose to adopt. That we have given you, therefore, the benefit of an inquiry, you must regard as an act of grace springing out of our sincere desire to do you ample justice. The nature of the offence imputed and proved is such as, at this

moment, every consideration of expediency demands should be visited with exemplary punishment. The friends of the royal cause, wherever they may reside, shall be protected from the wrath of the rebel government; and we have, therefore, no scruple in saying that the attempt upon the person of Mr. Philip Lindsay requires a signal retribution.—But for this last act, the court might have been induced to overlook all your other trespasses:—upon this, however, there is no hesitation.

‘Such being the state of the facts ascertained by this tribunal, its function ceases with its certificate of the truth of what has been proved before it. The rest remains to me. Without the form of an investigation, I might, as the commanding officer of a corps on detached service, and by virtue of special power conferred upon me, have made up a private judgment in the case: I have forborne to do that, until, by the sanction of a verdict of my comrades, I might assure myself that I acted on the clearest proofs.—These have been rendered.

‘My order, therefore, is,—in accordance with the clear decision of the court,—and, speaking to a soldier, I use no unnecessary phrase of condolence—that you be shot to death. Time presses on us and forbids delay. You will be conducted to immediate execution. Major Frazer,’—he said, turning to one of his officers,—‘to your discretion I commit this unpleasant duty.’—Then, in a tone of private direction, he added,—‘let it be done without delay;—foolish pomp and ceremony only magnify these trifles.—I wish to have it despatched at once.’

‘I would speak,’—said Butler, repressing the agitation of his feelings, and addressing Innis with a stern solemnity,—‘not to implore your mercy, nor to deprecate your sentence:—even if I could stoop to such an act of submission, I know my appeal would reach your ears like the idle wind:—but I have private affairs to speak of.’—

‘They were better untold, sir,’—interrupted Innis with an affected air of indifference.—‘I can listen to nothing now. We have other business to think of.—These last requests and settlements of private affairs are always troublesome,’—he muttered in a tone just audible to the officers

standing near him;—‘they conjure up useless sympathies.’—

‘I pray you, sir,’—interposed St. Jermyn.—

‘It is in vain—I cannot hear it,’—exclaimed the commander, evidently struggling to shake from his mind an uncomfortable weight.—‘These are women’s requests!—God’s mercy!—How does this differ from death upon the field of battle?—a soldier is always ready.—Ha!—What have we here?’—he exclaimed, as a trooper rode up to the group.—‘Where are you from? What news?’—

‘A vidette from Rocky Mount,’—answered the horseman,—‘I am sent to inform you that, yesterday, Sumpter defeated three hundred of our people on the Catawba, and has made all that were alive, prisoners,—besides capturing fifty or sixty wagons of stores which the detachment had under convoy for Camden.’—

The first inquiries that followed this communication related to Sumpter’s position, and especially whether he was advancing towards this camp.

‘He is still upon Catawba, tending northward,’—replied the vidette.

‘Then we are free from danger,’—interrupted Innis.—

‘I am stripping the feathers from a bird to-day that is worth half of Sumpter’s prize,’—he added, with a vengeful smile, to an officer who stood by him.

During this interval in which the commander of the post was engaged with the vidette, the guard had conducted the prisoner back to the house, and Innis, freed from the restraint of Butler’s presence, now gave way to the expression of a savage exultation at the power which the events of the morning had given him, to inflict punishment upon one that he termed an audacious rebel. ‘The chances jump well with us,’—he said—‘when they enable us to season the joy of these ragged traitors, by so notable a deed as the execution of one of their shrewdest emissaries. This fellow Butler has consideration amongst them, and fortune too:—at least he had it—but that has gone into better hands;—and, to say truth, he has a bold and most mischievous spirit. The devil has instigated him to cross our path;—he shall have the devil’s comfort for it.—The whole party taken, did you say?’—

'Every man, sir,'—replied the vidette,

'In God's name! how many men had this skulking fellow, Sumpter, at his back?'—

'They say about seven hundred.'

'And did the cowards strike to seven hundred rebels?'—

'They were tangled with the wagons,'—said the soldier,—'and were set on unawares, on the bank of the river, at the lower ferry.'

'Aye, that's the way! An ambuscade, no doubt,—a piece of cowardly bush-fighting. Fresh men against poor devils worn down by long marching!—Well, well, I have a good requital for the rascally trick. Major Butler's blood will weigh heavy in the scale, or I am mistaken!—Come, gentlemen, let us to quarters—we must hold a council.'

'Here is a letter,'—said one of the officers of the court,—'which I have this moment found on the table, under my sword belt;—it seems, from its address, to contain matter of moment. How it came here does not appear.'

'To colonel Innis, or any other officer commanding a corps in his majesty's service,'—said Innis, reading the superscription;—'besides, here is something significant,—*for life or death, with speed.*'—What can this mean?'—he added, as he broke open the paper and ran his eyes hastily over the contents.—'St. George! here is something strange, gentlemen. Listen!—

'By ill luck I have fallen into the possession of the whigs. They have received intelligence of the capture of major Butler, and, apprehending that some mischief might befall him, have constrained me to inform you that my life will be made answerable for any harsh treatment that he may receive at the hands of our friends. They are resolute men, and will certainly make me the victim of their retaliation.'

EDGAR ST. JERMYN,

Ensign of the 71st Reg't.

P. S. *For God's sake respect this paper, and be lenient to the prisoner.*'—

'Treason and forgery,—paltry forgery!'—exclaimed Innis, with a smile of derision, as he finished reading the letter.—'What ho! tell Frazer to lead out the prisoner,

and despatch him without a moment's delay.—So much for this shallow artifice!”—

‘A base forgery,’—said one of the officers in attendance,—‘and doubtless the work of the rebel major himself. He will die with this silly lie upon his conscience.—St. Jermyn, here,’—cried out the same officer to the captain, who was now at some distance,—‘here is an attempt to put a trick upon us by a counterfeit of your brother’s hand, telling a most doleful and improbable falsehood.—Look at it.’—

St. Jermyn read the letter,—and suddenly turning pale, exclaimed,—‘Great God!’—this is no trick. It is my brother’s own writing. He is in the custody of the whigs. How came this here? Who brought it? When was it written? Can nobody tell me?’

‘Tut, St. Jermyn!’—interrupted the officer, smiling,—‘You surely cannot be imposed on by such a device.—Look at the scrawl again. In truth, are you sure of it, man?’—he inquired with great surprise, as he perceived the increasing paleness of St. Jermyn’s brow.—

‘My brother’s life is in imminent danger,’—replied St. Jermyn, with intense earnestness.—‘Colonel Innis, as you value my happiness, I intreat you, countermand the order for the prisoner’s execution. I implore you, respect this letter. It is genuine, and I dread the consequences.—My poor brother, the youngest of my family, and the special darling of his parents!—For heaven’s sake, good colonel, pause until we learn something more of this mysterious business.’—

‘For your sake, my friend, and until we can investigate this matter,’—said Innis,—‘let the execution be suspended.’—

St. Jermyn instantly hurried to the guard, to communicate the new order.—

‘Whence comes this missive?’—demanded Innis.—‘It has neither date nor place described. Who brought it?—Did any one see the bearer?’—he asked aloud of the bystanders.

No one answered, except the officer who had first discovered the paper. ‘I know nothing more than what

you see. It was here upon the table. How long it had been there, I cannot tell.'

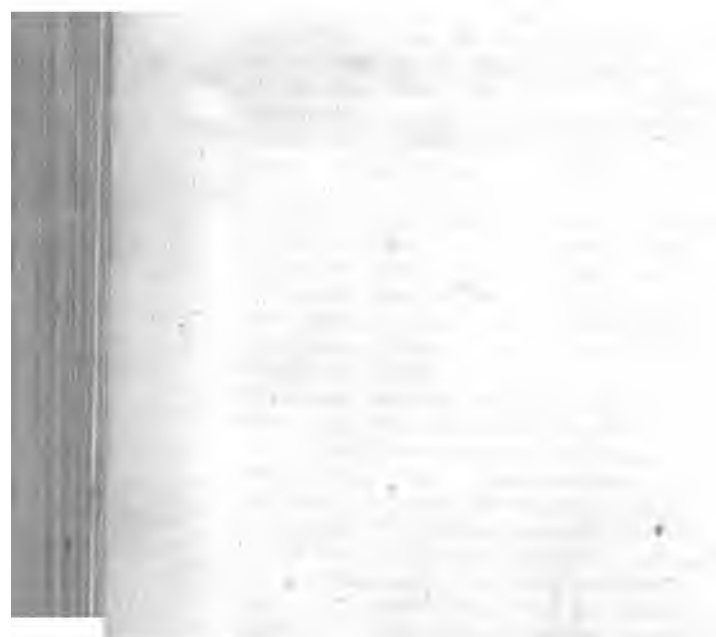
'It is strange,'—continued Innis.—'Can this young St. Jermyn have fallen in with Sumpter? Or, after all, is it not an ingenious forgery which has deceived our friend the captain? Still, who could have brought it here?'—

The letter was again examined by every individual present.

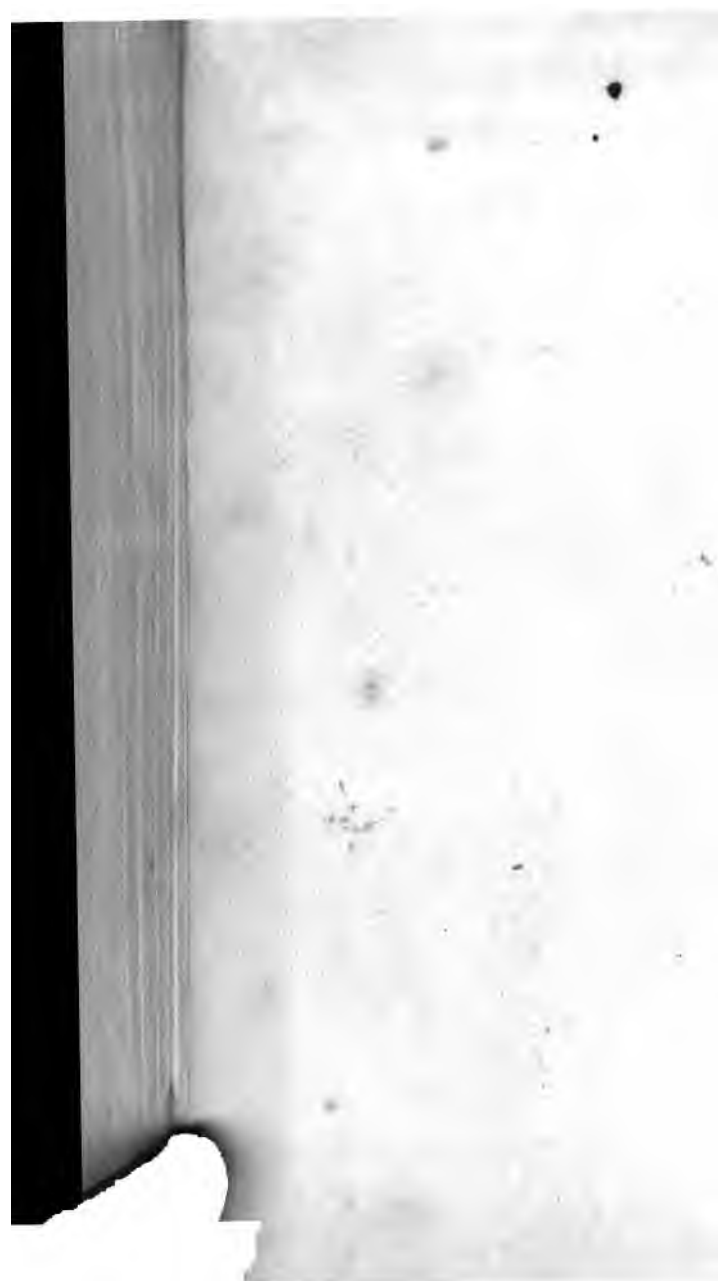
'It must be genuine,'—said one of the officers, shaking his head.—'Captain St. Jermyn was very much in earnest, and it is not likely he could be deceived. It has been mysteriously deposited here by some agent of the whigs. The person should be found, and compelled to give us more specific information. This matter must be looked to: the ensign, I doubt not, is in perilous circumstances.'

'Let the prisoner be strictly guarded, and held to wait our future pleasure,'—said Innis.—'I would not put in jeopardy the young ensign's life. A reward of twenty guineas shall be given to any one who brings me the bearer of this letter. And you, lieutenant Connelly,—take thirty troopers and scour the country round to gain intelligence of this capture of Edgar St. Jermyn.—Be careful to examine every man you meet, as to the presence of whig parties in this district. Away instantly,—and do not return without tidings of this singular event.'

The camp, by these occurrences, was thrown into great bustle. The prisoner was securely lodged in his former quarters, and placed under a double guard; consultations were held amongst the officers; and Butler himself was strictly interrogated in regard to the appearance of this mysterious letter, of the contents of which he was yet ignorant. The examination threw no light on the affair; and, very soon afterwards, a troop of horse were seen sallying beyond the limits of the camp, under lieutenant Connelly, to seek information of the fate of ensign St. Jermyn.











1223

1224

1225

1226

1227

1228

1229

1230

1231

1232

1233

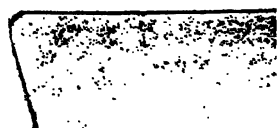
1234

1235

1236







12459.11A

NEW YORK PUBL
REFERENCE DEPART

ok is under no circum
taken from the Build

|

|



